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—

VOL. CLXIX.

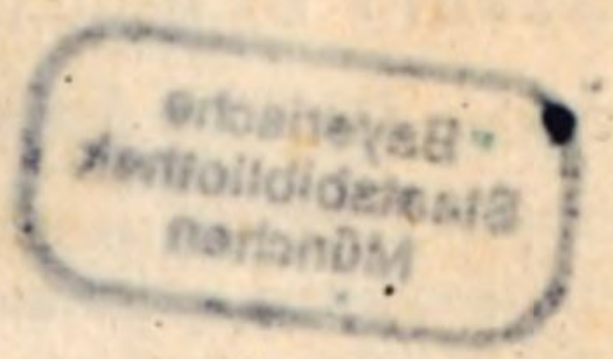
THE LETTERS AND WORKS

OF

LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU.

—

VOL. II.



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THE

LETTERS AND WORKS

OF

LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU.

EDITED BY HER GREAT GRANDSON,

LORD WHARNCLIFFE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

PARIS:

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RUE VIVIENNE; AND BY ALL THE PRINICIPAL BOOKSELLERS
ON THE CONTINENT.

—

1837.

PREFACE.

SOME of the lineal descendants of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu have thought it due to her literary fame, that a complete Edition of her Works should be published under their authority. The well known letters from Constantinople, which have become popular and classical throughout Europe, were first published in 1763, shortly after Lady Mary's death ; and the circumstances attending that publication are detailed in the memoir prefixed to Mr. Dallaway's edition of her works. Several other editions of these letters afterwards appeared, and to one (that of 1789) were appended a few more letters.

In the year 1803, Mr. Dallaway was permitted by the late Marquis of Bute to have access to the original papers and manuscripts then in his possession ; and Mr. Dallaway shortly afterwards published five volumes which are called "The Works of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, including her Correspondence, Poems, and Essays, published, by permission, from her genuine papers." A second edition appeared in 1817, with the addition of a few letters of Lady Mary's addressed to Mrs. Hewitt. To these editions was prefixed by Mr. Dallaway a memoir of Lady Mary.

The Editor of the present edition having had an opportunity of comparing Lady Mary's letters in their original state, with Mr. Dallaway's book, found that he had not only omitted several letters altogether, but that he had thought fit to leave out passages in others, and even to select portions of different letters, on different subjects, and of different dates, and, having combined and adapted them, to print them as original letters. He has also throughout both his editions frequently suppressed the names of the persons mentioned, and given the initials only.

In the edition now offered to the Public these defects are remedied. The letters from which Mr. Dallaway composed and extracted those published by him, are now given as they are in the originals, and the passages he left out are restored. The names are also printed at full length in all cases where they are so written in the original letters, or where they can be ascertained; and notes are added with such information as has been obtained respecting the persons whose names are so mentioned. It cannot be necessary for any purpose to make a mystery of the names of persons who have long since sunk into their graves. The letters which Mr. Dallaway omitted are also added, several of which are addressed to Lady Mar.

With regard to that correspondence, it cannot be denied that parts are written with a freedom of expression which would not be tolerated in the present day; and those parts may perhaps be deemed sometimes to trespass beyond the bounds of strict delicacy. (1) The Reader must, however, bear in mind that these letters were written as confidential communications from one sister to another, at a period when the feeling upon such subjects was by no means so nice as it now is; and that expressions, with which we now find great fault, might then be used by persons of the greatest propriety of conduct, and would only be considered as painting freely, and more keenly ridiculing, the vices and follies of the society in which the writer found herself, and not as used for the purpose of indulging in grossness of language. So considered, it is hoped that the publishing these letters as they were written will not be objected to; while, on the other hand, they abound in the wit and talent so peculiar to Lady Mary, and it would have been very difficult to alter or curtail them without injury to their spirit.

The whole of the correspondence between Lady Mary and Mr. Wortley before their marriage was religiously preserved by him, and part of it was published in Mr. Dallaway's edition. The whole, excepting only such parts as relate to mere matters of business, is now given; and it has been thought right that it

(1) Those parts were almost all published by Mr. Dallaway.

should be so, for the purpose of giving to the Reader a more complete view of the character of Lady Mary. The same rule has been applied to the correspondence between Lady Mary and her husband and daughter during her last residence abroad.

The letters which (as has been already stated) were published in the edition of the Turkish letters of the year 1789, Mr. Dallaway thought fit to reject as spurious; Lady Mary's daughter, Lady Bute, however, is known to have entertained no doubt whatever of their being genuine; and they will therefore be found in this collection, inserted as nearly as possible according to their dates.

The most considerable novelties to which this edition pretends, consist in the letters to Lady Pomfret, those to Sir James Steuart, of Coltness, and Lady Frances, and in the Introductory Anecdotes.

Of the authenticity of these letters there can be no doubt. Those to Lady Pomfret have been copied from the originals in Lady Mary's handwriting, and kindly communicated to the Editor by Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Campbell, who received them from his mother, a descendant of the Pierrepont family. Those to Sir James Steuart and Lady Frances, have been carefully preserved by the present Sir James. They were some years since printed at Glasgow for private circulation, and the Editor has to thank Sir James for their having been placed at his disposal for the purpose of this publication.

With regard to the Introductory Anecdotes, and also a great part of the Explanatory Notes in this edition, they are contributed by the only person now living who could have had the means of supplying them; and the Editor will indeed be greatly disappointed if the spirit and vigour with which these anecdotes are written do not satisfy the Reader that a ray of Lady Mary's talent has fallen upon one of her descendants.

These anecdotes were written to correct the mistakes and palpable want of information throughout Mr. Dallaway's memoir of Lady Mary, which, however, it has been thought right to reprint in this edition with notes of reference, which will enable the Reader to discover those mistakes without difficulty.

The present edition may indeed be said to contain all that can be now made out respecting Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, from documents preserved by her family, and all that can be supplied from the recollection of those who in early life were within the reach of information which could be depended upon.

To the Marquis of Bute and Lord Dudley Stuart the Editor has to tender his thanks for the permission so freely given to make use of the original letters and papers of his and their common ancestress. He is also indebted to Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, Esq., for the communication of the preface to the original edition of the Town Eclogues, of Melinda's Complaint, and of the lines written under the picture of Colonel Charles Churchill.

And, lastly, the Editor is in duty bound to acknowledge his obligations to his friend and near relation, the Rev. Dr. Corbett, of Wortley, to whom, in truth, the Reader, if he shall derive amusement or information from this edition of Lady Mary's works, is mainly indebted for its appearance. A descendant from Lady Mary in the same degree as the Editor, he has been equally anxious and more diligent in the endeavour to make it worthy of the patronage of the Public.

WHARNCLIFFE.

Wortley Hall,
December 14, 1836.

LETTERS

FROM LADY MARY TO MR. WORTLEY,

DURING HER SECOND RESIDENCE ABROAD;

FROM 1739 TO 1761.

Dartford.

I STAID an hour with the Duchess of Montague, and am arrived here at twelve o'clock, less fatigued than I expected. I should be very glad to hear you are well; if you write to me to be left at the post-house at Dover, I may have your letter before I leave that place.

July 26.

I AM safely arrived at Dover, without any accident, and have borne my journey very well. I have followed your direction in sending for Mr. Hall, who has been very civil. By his advice I have hired a boat for five guineas, otherwise I must have gone in the night, which he counselled me not to do. The wind is fair, and I hope to be in Calais to-morrow. I cannot say I am well, but I think not worse for my journey.

Calais, July 27, 1739.

I AM safely arrived at Calais, and found myself better on ship-board than I have been these six months; not in the least sick, though we had a very high sea, as you may imagine, since we came over in two hours and three quarters. My servants behaved very well; and Mary not in the least afraid, but said she would be drowned very willingly with my ladyship. They ask me here extravagant prices for chaises, of which there are great choice, both French and Italian: I have at last bought one for fourteen guineas, of a man whom Mr. Hall recommended to me. My things have been examined and sealed at the custom-house: they took from me a pound of snuff, but did not open my jewel-boxes, which they let pass

on my word, being things belonging to my dress. I set out early to-morrow. I am very impatient to hear from you: I could not stay for the post at Dover for fear of losing the tide. I beg you would be so good as to order Mr. Kent to pack up my side-saddle, and all the tackle belonging to it, in a box, to be sent with my other things: if (as I hope) I recover my health abroad so much as to ride, I can get none I shall like so well.

FROM MR. WORTLEY TO LADY MARY.

13 Aug. 1739.

I SUPPOSED you was advised at Boulogne to go through Laon, but I should be glad to know whether you took that road as the best to Dijon, or only to avoid Paris; also whether you went by Cambray; or where you left the Paris road. If you mention a few of the great towns you have passed, I shall see the whole journey. As you had cold rains, I am at a loss to guess, whether the fires were occasioned by the fault of the weather or your chaise. I wish (if it be easy) you would be exact and clear in your facts, because I shall lay by carefully what you write of your travels. I suppose the difficult part is over, and that from Dijon you might if you pleased go in an open boat to any of the places you seemed to like, with as much safety as you could travel on the Thames; but I am persuaded you will find easy journeys by land more healthy and pleasant.—The other letter that comes to you this post, was kept back by T. K.'s mistake. I choose not to open it to write what is in this, as I have not yet added much paper to your baggage.

TO MR. WORTLEY.

Dijon, Aug. 18, 1739, N. S.

I AM at length arrived here very safely, and without any bad accident; and so much mended in my health, that I am surprised at it. France is so much improved, it would not be known to be the same country we passed through twenty years ago. Every thing I see speaks in praise of Cardinal Fleury: the roads are all mended, and the greater part of them paved as well as the streets of Paris, planted on both sides like the roads in Holland; and such good care taken against robbers, that you may cross the country with your purse in your hand: but as to travelling *incognita*, I may as well walk *incognita* in the Pall-Mall. There is not any town in France where there are not English, Scotch, or Irish families established; and I have met with people that have seen me

(though often such as I do not remember to have seen) in every town I have passed through; and I think the farther I go, the more acquaintance I meet. Here are in this town no less than sixteen English families of fashion. Lord Mansel lodges in the house with me, and a daughter of Lord Bathurst's (Mrs. Whitshed) is in the same street. The Duke of Rutland is gone from hence some time ago, as Lady Peterborough told me at St. Omer's; which was one reason that determined me to come here, thinking to be quiet; but I find it impossible, and that will make me leave the place, after the return of this post. The French are more changed than their roads; instead of pale, yellow faces, wrapped up in blankets, as we saw them, the villages are all filled with fresh-coloured lusty peasants, in good clothes and clean linen. It is incredible what an air of plenty and content is over the whole country. I hope to hear as soon as possible, that you are in good health.

FROM MR. WORTLEY TO LADY MARY.

26 Aug. 1739.

THOUGH you are surprised, I am not at all, that your health is so much mended. I have hitherto found travelling a never failing remedy for any disorder of the head or stomach. They are occasioned by a settlement of humours, which are removed by exercise. I have not yet had the benefit of a journey to the North, but I hope I shall in a fortnight or three weeks. All things here are just as you left them, except the weather, which has been the warmest in August. The showers and clouds have been as frequent as in Cæsar's time, and will I fear continue so till the sun or the globe has undergone some great change. I answer yours of the 10th to-day, though it came but yesterday, because you write you will stay at Dijon 'till the return of the post.

Turin, Sept. 10, 1739.

I AM now, thank God, happily past the Alps. I believe I wrote to you, that I had met English of my acquaintance in every town in France. This fortune continued to the last; for at Pont Beauvoisin I met Lord Carlisle, who was in the inn when I arrived, and immediately came to offer me his room, his cook to dress my supper (he himself having supped before I came in), and all sorts of civility. We passed the evening together, and had a great deal of discourse. He said he liked Rome so well, that he should not have left it so soon, but on the account of Lord Morpeth, who was so ill there, that he was not yet recovered, and now carried in a litter. His distemper has been

the bloody flux, which returned upon him in the mountains with so much violence, they had been kept three weeks at a miserable village; he is still so weak that I did not see him. My Lord Carlisle (1) told me that next to Rome the best place to stay in Italy is, without contradiction, Venice: that the impertinence of the little sovereigns in other countries is intolerable. I have no objection to his advice, but the fear of the air not agreeing with me, though my journey has now so far established my health, that I have lost all my bad symptoms, and am ready to think I could even bear the damps of London. I will therefore venture to try, and if I find Venice too cold or moist (which I am more afraid of), I can remove very easily; though I resolve against Rome, on an account which you may guess. My Lord Carlisle said, he thought me in the right; that it is very hard to avoid meeting a certain person; and there are so many little dirty spies that write any lie which comes in their heads, that the doing it may be dangerous. I have received a letter from Lady Pomfret, that she is leaving Vienna, and intends for Venice, which is another inducement to me to go there; but the chief is the hopes of living as quietly and as privately as I please, which hitherto I have found impossible. The English resident here, Mr. Villette, etc., came to wait on me the very night of my arrival, to my great surprise. I found the intelligence came from the King of Sardinia's officers, who were at Pont Voisin, and had learnt my name from Lord Carlisle's servants. I have been obliged to excuse my going to court, as having no court-dress, and saying that I intended to leave the town in a few days. However, I have not been able to avoid the visits that have been made to me.

Venice, Sept. 25, 1739.

I AM at length happily arrived here, I thank God; I wish it had been my original plan, which would have saved me some money and fatigue; though I have not much reason to regret the last, since I am convinced it has greatly contributed to the restoration of my health. I met nothing disagreeable on my journey but too much company. I find (contrary to the rest of the world) I did not think myself so considerable as I am; for I verily believe, if one of the pyramids of Egypt had travelled it could not have been more followed; and if I had received all the visits that have been intended me, I should have stopped at least two years in every town I came through. I liked Milan so well, that if I had not desired all my letters to be di-

(1) Henry Howard, Earl of Carlisle, died 1758, and his son Charles, Lord Morpeth, in August 1741.

rected hither, I think I should have been tempted to stay there. One of the pleasures I found there was the Borromean library, where all strangers have free access; and not only so, but liberty, on giving a note for it, to take any printed book home with them. I saw several curious manuscripts there; and as a proof of my recovery, I went up to the very top of the dome of the great church without any assistance. I am now in a lodging on the Great Canal. Lady Pomfret(1) is not yet arrived, but I expect her very soon; and if the air does not disagree with me, I intend seeing the carnival here. I hope your health continues, and that I shall hear from you very soon.

Venice, October 14, 1739.

I FIND myself very well here. I am visited by the most considerable people of the town, and all the foreign ministers, who have most of them made entertainments for me. I dined yesterday at the Spanish ambassador's, who even surpassed the French in magnificence. He let me in at the hall-door, and the lady met me at the stair-head, to conduct me through the long apartment; in short, they could not have shown me more honours, if I had been an ambassadress. She desired me to think myself patrona del casa, and offered me all the services in her power, to wait on me when I pleased, etc. They have the finest palace in Venice. What is very convenient, I hear it is not at all expected that I should make any dinners, it not being the fashion for any body to do it here, but the foreign ministers; and I find I can live here very genteelly on my allowance. I have already a very agreeable general acquaintance; though when I came, here was no one I had ever seen in my life, but the Cavaliere Grimani and the Abbé Conti. I must do them the justice to say they have taken pains to be obliging to me. The Procurator brought his niece (who is at the head of his family) to wait on me; and they invited me to reside with them at their palace on the Brent, but I did not think it proper to accept of it. He also introduced to me the Signora Pisani Mocenigo, who is the most considerable lady here. The Nuncio is particularly civil to me; he has been several times to see me, and has offered me the use of his box at

(1) Henrietta Louisa, daughter and heir of Lord Chancellor Jefferies, wife of Thomas Earl of Pomfret. She resided chiefly at Rome, where she wrote the Life of Vandyck. A part of the collection of marbles made by Thomas Earl of Arundel, having been purchased by William Earl of Pomfret, was given by her to the University of Oxford, in 1758.

the opera. I have many others at my service, and in short it is impossible for a stranger to be better received than I am. Here are no English, except a Mr. Berlie and his governor, who arrived two days ago, and who intend but a short stay.

I hope you are in good health, and that I shall hear of it before you can receive this letter.

Venice, Dec. 25, 1739, O. S.

I RECEIVED yours yesterday, dated Dec. 7. I find my health very well here, notwithstanding the cold, which is very sharp, but the sun shines as clear as at midsummer. I am treated here with more distinction than I could possibly expect. I went to see the ceremony of high mass celebrated by the Doge, on Christmas eve. He appointed a gallery for me and the Prince of Wolfembatch, where no other person was admitted but those of our company. A greater compliment could not have been paid me if I had been a sovereign princess. The Doge's niece (he having no lady) met me at the palace-gate, and led me through the palace to the church of St. Mark, where the ceremony was performed in the pomp you know, and we were not obliged to any act of adoration. The Electoral Prince of Saxony is here in public, and makes a prodigious expense. His governor is Count Wackerbart, son to that Madame Wackerbart with whom I was so intimate at Vienna; on which account he shows me particular civilities, and obliges his pupil to do the same. I was last night at an entertainment made for him by the Signora Pisani Mocenigo, which was one of the finest I ever saw, and he desired me to sit next to him in a great chair: in short I have all the reason that can be, to be satisfied with my treatment in this town; and I am glad I met Lord Carlisle, who directed me hither.

I have so little correspondence at London, I should be pleased to hear from you whatever happens among my acquaintance. I am sorry for Mr. Pelham's misfortune; (1) though 't is long since that I have looked on the hopes of continuing a family as one of the vainest of mortal prospects.

Tho' Solomon, with a thousand wives,
To get a wise successor strives;
But one, and he a fool, survives.

The Procurator of St. Mark has desired his compliments to you whenever I write.

(1) The death of his two sons on two following days, Nov. 27, 28, 1739.

Venice, Jan. 25, 1739-40.

I WROTE to you last post; but as I do not know whether I was particular enough in answering all the questions you asked me, I add the following account, which I do not wonder will surprise you, since both the Procurator Grimani and the Abbé Conti tell me often, that these last twenty years have so far changed the customs of Venice, that they hardly know it for the same country. Here are several foreign ladies of quality, I mean Germans, and from other parts of Italy; but not one Frenchwoman. They are all well received by the *gentil* donnas, who make a vanity in introducing them to the assemblies and their public diversions, though all those ladies, as well as myself, go frequently to the Princesse of Campo Florida's (the Spanish ambassadress) assembly. She is in a very particular manner obliging to me, and is I really think one of the best sort of women I ever knew. The Neapolitan (though he has been here some months) makes his public entry to-day, which I am to go see about an hour hence. He gives a great entertainment to-night, where all the noble Venetians of both sexes will be in masque. I am engaged to go with the Signora Justiniani Gradinego, who is one of the first ladies here. The Prince of Saxony has invited me to come into his box at the opera; but I have not yet accepted of it, he having always the four ladies with him that are wives to the four senators deputed to do the honours of Venice; and I am afraid they should think I interfere with them in the honour of his conversation, which they are very fond of, and have behaved very coldly to some other noble Venetian ladies that have taken the liberty of his box. I will be directed in this (as I am in all public matters) by the Procurator Grimani. My letter is shortened by the arrival of the Signora.

Venice, March 29, 1740.

THE letters Mr. Waters mentions from —— were pretty much in the usual style; he desires to leave the town where he now is, because he says there is no temptation to riot, and he would show how able he is to resist it: I answer him this post, and shall endeavour to show him mildly the necessity of being easy in his present situation. Now Lord Granby (1) leaves this place to-morrow, to set out for Constantinople; the Prince of Saxony stays till the second of May; in the mean time there are entertainments given him almost every day of one sort or other,

(1) John Manners, the heroic Marquis of Granby, was born in 1720,. Commander-in chief in Germany, 1762. Died 1770.

and a regatta preparing, which is expected by all strangers with great impatience. He went to see the arsenal three days ago, waited on by a numerous nobility of both sexes; the Bucentaur was adorned and launched, a magnificent collation given, and we sailed a little way in it: I was in company with the Signora Justiniani Gradinego, and Signora Marina Crizzo. As you have been at Venice, there is no occasion of describing those things to you. There were two cannons founded in his presence, and a galley built and launched in an hour's time. Last night there was a concert of voices and instruments at the Hospital of the Incurabili, where there were two girls that in the opinion of all people excel either Faustina or Cuzzoni, but you know they are never permitted to sing on any theatre.

Lord Fitzwilliam (1) is expected in this town to-night, on his return to England, as I am told. The Prince's behaviour is very obliging to all, and in no part of it liable to censure, though I think there is nothing to be said in praise of his genius; and I suppose you know he has been lame from his birth, and is carried about in a chair, though a beautiful person from the waist upwards: it is said his family design him for the church, he having four brothers who are fine children. The weather is now very fine; we have had none of the canals frozen in the coldest part of the winter, but the mountains are still covered with snow.

Your last letters have said nothing of my baggage. If there is danger of its being taken by privateers, I had rather it staid in England, and I would go into the southern part of France, where it might be conveyed to me without hazard, than risk the loss of it.—If there is a probability of a rupture with France, I can go to Avignon.

Venice, April 19, 1740, N. S.

I RECEIVED yours of January 1, but yesterday; for which reason I think it useless to answer it at present, but if I find any occasion shall not fail to follow your orders. Lord Granby is set out on his journey for Constantinople. Lord Fitzwilliam arrived here three days ago; he came to see me the next day, as all the English do, who are much surprised at the civilities and the familiarity with which I am received by the noble ladies. Every body tells me 'tis what never was done but to myself; and I own I have a little vanity in it, because the French ambassador told me when I first came, that though the Procurator Grimani might persuade them to visit me, he defied me to enter

(1) He died 1756.

into any sort of intimacy with them: instead of which they call me out almost every day on some diversion or other, and are desirous to have me in all their parties of pleasure. I am invited to-morrow to the Foscarini to dinner, which is to be followed by a concert and a ball, where I shall be the only stranger, though here are at present a great number come to see the regatta, which is fixed for the 29th of this month, N. S. I shall see it at the Procurator Grimani's, where there will be a great entertainment that day. My own house is very well situated to see it, being on the Grand Canal; but I would not refuse him and his niece, since they seem desirous of my company, and I shall oblige some other ladies with my windows. They are hired at a great rate to see the show. I suppose you know the nature of it, but if it will be any amusement I will send you a particular description.

Venice, June 1, 1740.

I WROTE you a long letter yesterday, which I sent by a private hand, who will see it safely delivered. It is impossible to be better treated, I may even say more courted, than I am here. I am very glad of your good fortune at London. You may remember, I have always told you it is in your power to make the first figure in the House of Commons. As to the bill, I perfectly remember the paying of it; which you may easily believe when you enquire, that all auction bills are paid at farthest within eight days after the sale: the date of this is March 1, and I did not leave London till July 25; and in that time have been at many other auctions, particularly Lord Halifax's, which was a short time before my journey. This is not the first of Cock's mistakes; he is famous for making them, which are (he says) the fault of his servants. You seem to mention the regatta in a manner as if you would be pleased with a description of it. It is a race of boats: they are accompanied by vessels which they call Piotes or Bichones, that have a mind to display their magnificence; they are a sort of machines adorned with all that sculpture and gilding can do to make a shining appearance. Several of them cost one thousand pounds sterling, and I believe none less than five hundred; they are rowed by gondoliers dressed in rich habits, suitable to what they represent. There were enough of them to look like a little fleet, and I own I never saw a finer sight. It would be too long to describe every one in particular, I shall only name the principal:—the Signora Pisani Mocenigo's represented the Chariot of the Night, drawn by four sea-horses, and showing the rising of the moon, accompanied with stars, the statues on each side

representing the hours to the number of twenty-four, rowed by gondoliers in rich liveries, which were changed three times, all of equal richness, and the decorations changed also to the dawn of Aurora and the mid-day sun, the statues being new dressed every time, the first in green, the second time red, and the last blue, all equally laced with silver, there being three races. Signor Soranto represented the kingdom of Poland, with all the provinces and rivers in that dominion, with a concert of the best instrumental music in rich Polish habits; the painting and gilding were exquisite in their kinds. Signor Contarini's piote showed the liberal arts; Apollo was seated on the stern upon Mount Parnassus, Pegasus behind, and the Muses seated round him: opposite was a figure representing Painting, with Fame blowing her trumpet; and on each side Sculpture and Music in their proper dresses. The Procurator Foscarini's was the chariot of Flora guided by Cupids, and adorned with all sorts of flowers, rose-trees, etc. Signor Julio Contarini's represented the triumphs of Valour; Victory was on the stern, and all the ornaments warlike trophies of every kind. Signor Correri's was the Adriatic Sea receiving into her arms the Hope of Saxony. Signor Alvisio Mocenigo's was the garden of Hesperides; the whole fable was represented by different statues. Signor Querini had the chariot of Venus drawn by doves, so well done, they seemed ready to fly upon the water; the Loves and Graces attended her. Signor Paul Doria had the chariot of Diana, who appeared hunting in a large wood; the trees, hounds, stag, and nymphs, all done naturally: the gondoliers dressed like peasants attending the chace; and Endymion, lying under a large tree, gazing on the goddess. Signor Angelo Labbia represented Poland crowning Saxony, waited on by the Virtues and subject Provinces. Signor Angelo Molino was Neptune, waited on by the Rivers. Signor Vicenzo Morosini's piote showed the triumphs of Peace; Discord being chained at her feet, and she, surrounded with the Pleasures, etc.

I believe you are already weary of this description, which can give you but a very imperfect idea of the show; but I must say one word of the bichonis, which are less vessels, quite open. some representing gardens, others apartments, all the oars being gilt either with gold or silver, and the gondoliers' liveries either velvet or rich silk, with a profusion of lace, fringe, and embroidery. I saw this show at the Procurator Grimani's house, which was near the place where the prizes were delivered: there was a great assembly invited on the same occasion, which were all nobly entertained. I can get no better

ink here, though I have tried several times, and it is a great vexation to me to want it.

Florence, Aug. 11, 1740.

THIS is a very fine town, and I am much amused with visiting the gallery, which I do not doubt you remember too well to need any description of. Lord and Lady Pomfret take pains to make the place agreeable to me, and I have been visited by the greatest part of the people of quality. Here is an opera which I have heard twice, but it is not so fine either for voices or decorations as that at Venice. I am very willing to be at Leghorn when my things arrive, which I fear will hinder my visiting Rome this season, except they come sooner than is generally expected. If I could go from thence by sea to Naples with safety, I should prefer it to a land journey, which I am told is very difficult; and that it is impossible I should stay there long, the people being entirely unsociable. I do not desire much company, but would not confine myself to a place where I could see none. I have written to your daughter, directed to Scotland, this post.

Rome, Oct. 24, 1740.

I ARRIVED here in good health three days ago, and this is the first post-day. I have taken a lodging for a month, which is (as they tell me) but a short time to take a view of all the antiquities, etc., that are to be seen. From hence I purpose to set out for Naples. I am told by every body that I shall not find it agreeable to reside in. I expect Lady Pomfret here in a few days. It is summer here, and I left winter at Florence; the snows having begun to fall on the mountains. I shall probably see the new ceremony of the Pope's taking possession of the Vatican, which is said to be the finest that is ever performed at Rome. I have no news to send from hence. If you would have me speak to any particular point, I beg you will let me know it, and I will give you the best information I am able.

Rome, Nov. 1, 1740, N. S.

I HAVE now been here a week, and am very well diverted with viewing the fine buildings, paintings, and antiquities. I have neither made nor received one visit, nor sent word to any body of my arrival, on purpose to avoid interruptions of that sort. The weather is so fine that I walk every evening in a different beautiful garden; and I own I am charmed with what I see of this town, though there yet remains a great deal more to be seen. I purpose making a stay of a month, which shall

be entirely taken up in that employment, and then I will remove to Naples, to avoid, if possible, feeling the winter. I do not trouble you with any descriptions, since you have been here, and I suppose very well remember every thing that is worth remembering; but (as I mentioned in my last) if you would have me speak to any particular point, I will give you the best information in my power. Direct your next letter to Monsieur Belloni, Banquier, à Rome. He will take care to deliver it to me, either here or at Naples. Letters are very apt to miscarry, especially those to this place.

Rome, Nov. 12, 1740.

I SHALL set out for Naples on next Friday: I do not doubt liking the situation, but by all the information I can get, it will be every way improper for my residence; and I purpose no longer stay there than is necessary to see what is curious. I have been very diligent in viewing every thing here, making no acquaintance, that I might have no interruption. Here is a statue of Antinous lately found, which is said to be equal to any in Rome, and is to be sold; perhaps the Duke of Bedford might be glad to hear of it. I do not hear of one valuable picture that is to be purchased. It has been this last week as dark and rainy as ever I saw it in England. Your letter of September 23 came to me but this day. I perceive letters are stopped and perused more carefully than ever, which hinders my writing any of the reports I hear; some of them are very extraordinary. The Emperor's ambassador here has taken the character of the Queen of Bohemia's, and, as such, presented his credentials, which have been received.

Naples, Nov. 23, N. S. 1724.

I ARRIVED here last night, after a very disagreeable journey: I would not in my last give you any account of the present state of Rome, knowing all letters are opened there; but I cannot help mentioning what is more curious than all the antiquities, which is, that there is literally no money in the whole town, where they follow Mr. Law's scheme, and live wholly upon paper.

Belloni, who is the greatest banker not only of Rome but all Italy, furnished me with fifty sequins, which he solemnly swore was all the money he had in the house. They go to market with paper, pay the lodgings with paper, and, in short, there is no specie to be seen, which raises the price of every thing to the utmost extravagance, nobody knowing what to ask for their

goods. It is said the present Pope (who has a very good character) has declared he will endeavour a remedy, though it is very difficult to find one. He was bred a lawyer, and has passed the greatest part of his life in that profession; and is so sensible of the misery of the state, that he is reported to have said that he never thought himself in want till his elevation. He has no relations that he takes any notice of; but the country belonging to him, which I have passed, is almost uninhabited, and in a poverty beyond any thing I ever saw. The kingdom of Naples appears gay and flourishing; and the town so crowded with people, that I have with great difficulty got a very sorry lodging.

Naples, Dec. 6, 1740.

I HEARD last night the good news of the arrival of the ship on which my things are loaded, at Leghorn: it would be easy to have them conveyed hither: I like the climate extremely, which is now so soft, that I am actually sitting without any want of a fire. I do not find the people so savage as they were represented to me. I have received visits from several of the principal ladies; and I think I could meet with as much company here as I desire; but here is one article both disagreeable and incommodious, which is the grandeur of the equipages. Two coaches, two running footmen, four other footmen, a gentleman usher, and two pages, are as necessary here as the attendance of a single servant is at London. All the Spanish customs are observed very rigorously. I could content myself with all of them except this: but I see plainly, from my own observation as well as intelligence, that it is not to be dispensed with, which I am heartily vexed at.

The affairs of Europe are now so uncertain, that it appears reasonable to me to wait a little, before I fix my residence, that I may not find myself in the theatre of war, which is threatened on all sides. I hope you have the continuation of your health; mine is very well established at present. The town lately discovered is at Portici, about three miles from this place. Since the first discovery, no care has been taken, and the ground fallen in, so that the present passage to it is, as I am told by every body, extremely dangerous, and for some time, nobody ventures into it. I have been assured by some English gentlemen, who were let down into it the last year, that the whole account given in the newspapers is literally true, probably great curiosities might be found there; but there has been no expense made, either by propping the ground or clearing a way into it; and as the earth falls in daily, it will possibly be soon

stopped up, as it was before. I wrote to you last post a particular account of my reasons for not choosing my residence here, though the air is very agreeable to me, and I see I could have as much company as I desire; but I am persuaded the climate is much changed since you knew it. The weather is now very moist and misty, and has been so for a long time; however it is much softer than in any other place I know. I desire you would direct to Monsieur Belloni, Banker, at Rome: he will forward your letters wherever I am; the present uncertain situation of affairs all over Europe makes every correspondence precarious.

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27 Dec. 1740.

I DID not wri'e to you last post, hoping to have been able to have given you an account of every thing I had observed at Portici; but I have not yet obtained the King's licence, which must be had before I can be admitted to see the pictures, and fragments of statues which have been found there, and has been hitherto delayed on various pretences, it being at present a very singular favour. They say that some English carried a painter with them the last year to copy the pictures, which renders it the more difficult at present to get leave to see them. I have taken all possible pains to get information of this subterranean building, and am told 't is the remains of the ancient city of Hercolana, and by what I can collect, there was a theatre entire, with all the scenes and ancient decorations: they have broke it to pieces by digging irregularly. I hope in a few days to get permission to go, and will then give you the exactest description I am capable of. I have received no letters this three weeks, which does not surprise me, though it displeases me very much, hearing the same complaint made by every body. Mount Vesuvius is much diminished, as I am generally told, since the last great eruption, which was four years ago. The court here is very magnificent, and all the customs entirely Spanish. The new opera-house, built by this King, is the largest in Europe. I hear a great deal of news, true and false, but cannot communicate it at this time. I hope my next letter will be more particular.

Rome, Jan. 13, 1740-1, N. S.

I RETURNED hither last night, after six weeks' stay at Naples; great part of that time was vainly taken up in endeavouring to satisfy your curiosity and my own, in relation to the late-discovered town of Herculaneum. I waited eight days in hopes of permission to see the pictures and other rarities taken from

thence, which are preserved in the King's palace at Portici; but I found it was to no purpose, his Majesty keeping the key in his own cabinet, which he would not part with, though the Prince de Zathia (who is one of his favourites) I believe very sincerely tried his interest to obtain it for me. He is son to the Spanish ambassador I knew at Venice, and both he and his lady loaded me with civilities at Naples. The court in general is more barbarous than any of the ancient Goths. One proof of it, among many others, was melting down a beautiful copper statue of a vestal found in this new ruin, to make medallions for the late solemn christening. The whole court follow the Spanish customs and politics. I could say a good deal on this subject if I thought my letter would come safe to your hands; the apprehension it may not, hinders my answering another enquiry you make, concerning a family here, of which indeed I can say little, avoiding all commerce with those that frequent it. Here are some young English travellers; among them Lord Strafford (1) behaves himself really very modestly and genteelly, and has lost the pertness he acquired in his mother's assembly. Lord Lincoln appears to have spirit and sense, and professes great abhorrence of all measures destructive to the liberty of his country. I do not know how far the young men may be corrupted on their return, but the majority of those I have seen, have seemed strongly in the same sentiment. Lady Newburgh's eldest daughter, whom I believe you may have seen at Lord Westmorland's, is married to Count Mahony, who is in great figure at Naples: she was extremely obliging to me; they made a fine entertainment for me, carried me to the opera, and were civil to me to the utmost of their power. If you should happen to see Mrs. Bulkely, I wish you would make her some compliment upon it. I received this day yours of the 20th and 28th of November.

Leghorn, Feb. 25, 1740-1, N. S.

I ARRIVED here last night, and have received this morning the bill of seven hundred and five dollars, odd money.

I shall be a little more particular in my accounts from hence than I durst be from Rome, where all the letters are opened

(1) William Wentworth, the fourth Earl of Strafford, married Lady Anne, second daughter of John Duke of Argyll, sister of Lady Mary Coke and Lady Betty Mackenzie. He built the south front of Wentworth Castle, in Yorkshire, and was eminently skilled in architecture and virtu. He enjoyed an intimate friendship with the last Lord Orford, in the fifth volume of whose works his correspondence is published from 1756 to 1790.

and often stopped. I hope you had mine, relating to the antiquities in Naples. I shall now say something of the court of Rome. The first minister, Cardinal Valenti, has one of the best characters I ever heard of, though of no great birth, and has made his fortune by an attachment to the Duchess of Salviah. The present Pope is very much beloved, and seems desirous to ease the people, and deliver them out of the miserable poverty they are reduced to. I will send you the history of his elevation, as I had it from a very good hand, if it will be any amusement to you. I never saw the Chevalier during my whole stay at Rome. I saw his two sons at a public ball in masque; they were very richly adorned with jewels. The eldest seems thoughtless enough, and is really not unlike Mr. Lyttleton(1) in his shape and air. The youngest is very well made, dances finely, and has an ingenuous countenance; he is but fourteen years of age. The family live very splendidly, yet pay every body, and (wherever they get it) are certainly in no want of money. I heard at Rome the truly tragical history of the Princess Sobieski, which is very different from what was said in London. The Pope, Clement the Twelfth, was commonly supposed her lover, and she used to go about publicly in his state coach to the great scandal of the people. Her husband's mistress spirited him up to resent it, so far that he left Rome upon it, and she retired to a convent, where she destroyed herself. The English travellers at Rome behaved in general very discreetly. I have reason to speak well of them, since they were all exceedingly obliging to me. It may sound a little vain to say it, but they really paid a regular court to me, as if I had been their queen, and their governess told me, that the desire of my approbation had a very great influence on their conduct. While I staid there was neither gaming nor any sort of extravagance. I used to preach to them very freely, and they all thanked me for it. I shall stay some time in this town, where I expect Lady Pomfret. I think I have answered every particular you seemed curious about. If there be any other point you would have me speak of, I will be as exact as I can.

Turin, April 11, 1741.

I TAKE this opportunity of writing to you on many subjects in a freer manner than I durst by the post, knowing that all letters are opened both here and in other places, which occasions them to be often lost, besides other inconveniences that may happen.

(1) George Lord Lyttleton.

The English politics are the general jest of all the nations I have passed through; and even those who profit by our folly cannot help laughing at our notorious blunders; though they are all persuaded that the minister does not act from weakness but corruption, and that the Spanish gold influences his measures. I had a long discourse with Count Mahony on this subject, who said, very freely, that half the ships sent to the coast of Naples, that have lain idle in our ports last summer, would have frightened the Queen of Spain into a submission to whatever terms we thought proper to impose. The people, who are loaded with taxes, hate the Spanish government, of which I had daily proofs, hearing them curse the English for bringing their King to them, whenever they saw any of our nation: but I am not much surprised at the ignorance of our ministers, after seeing what creatures they employ to send them intelligence. Except Mr. Villette, at this court, there is not one that has common sense: I say this without prejudice, all of them having been as civil and serviceable to me as they could. I was told at Rome, and convinced of it by circumstances, that there have been great endeavours to raise up a sham plot: the person who told it me was an English antiquarian, who said he had been offered any money to send accusations. The truth is, he had carried a letter, written by Mr. Mann,(1) from Florence to that purpose to him, which he showed in the English palace; however, I believe he is a spy, and made use of that stratagem to gain credit. This court makes great preparations for war: the King is certainly no bright genius, but has great natural humanity: his minister, who has absolute power, is generally allowed to have sense; as a proof of it, he is not hated as the generality of ministers are. I have seen neither of them, not going to court, because I will not be at the trouble and expense of the dress, which is the same as at Vienna. I sent my excuse by Mr. Villette, as I hear is commonly practised by ladies that are only passengers. I have had a great number of visitors; the nobility piquing themselves on civility to strangers. The weather is still exceedingly cold, and I do not intend to move till I have the prospect of a pleasant journey.

Genoa, July 15,1741.

It is so long since I have heard from you, that though I hope your silence is occasioned by your being in the country, yet I cannot help being very uneasy, and in some apprehension that

(1) Sir Horace Mann.

you are indisposed. I wrote you word, some time ago, that I have taken a house here for the remainder of the summer, and desired you would direct, *recommandé à Monsieur Birtles, Consul de S. M. Britannique.* I saw in the last newspapers (which he sends me) the death of Lord Orford. I am vexed at it, for the reasons you know, and recollect what I've often heard you say, that it is impossible to judge what is best for ourselves. I received yesterday the bill for ——, for which I return you thanks. If I wrote you all the political stories I hear, I should have a great deal to say. A great part is not true, and what I think so, I dare not mention, in consideration of the various hands this paper must pass through before it reaches you. Lord Lincoln (1) and Mr. Walpole (2) (youngest son to Sir Robert) left this place two days ago; they visited me during their short stay; they are gone to Marseilles, and design passing some months in the south of France.—I have had a particular account of Lord Orford's death (3) from a very good hand, which he advanced by choice, refusing all remedies till it was too late to make use of them. There was a will found, dated 1728, in which he gave every thing to my lady; (4) which has affected her very much. Notwithstanding the many reasons she had to complain of him, I always thought there was more weakness than dishonesty in his actions, and is a confirmation of the truth of that maxim of Mr. Rochefoucault, *un sot n'a pas assez d'étoffe pour être honnête homme.*

Genoa, Aug. 25, 1741. N. S.

I RECEIVED yours of the 27th July this morning. I had that of March 19, which I answered very particularly the following post, with many thanks for the increase of my allowance. It appears to me that the letters I wrote between the 11th of April and the 31st of May were lost, which I am not surprised at. I was then at Turin, and that court in a very great confusion, and extremely jealous of me, thinking I came to examine their conduct. I have some proof of this, which I do not repeat, lest this should be stopped also.

(1) Henry Clinton, Earl of Lincoln, married Catharine, daughter of Henry Pelham, and was afterward Duke of Newcastle.

(2) Honourable Horace Walpole, the last Earl of Orford, then on his travels.

(3) Robert, the second Earl of Orford, died in June 1741.

(4) Margaret, daughter and sole heir of Samuel Rolle of Haynton, in the county of Dorset, who married secondly the Hon. Sewallis Shirley, fourth son of the first Earl Ferrers by his second wife Selina, daughter of George Finch, of the City of London, Esq.

The manners of Italy are so much changed since we were here last, the alteration is scarcely credible. They say it has been by the last war. The French, being masters, introduced all their customs, which were eagerly embraced by the ladies, and I believe will never be laid aside; yet the different governments make different manners in every state. You know, though the republic is not rich, here are many private families vastly so, and live at a great superfluous expense: all the people of the first quality keep coaches as fine as the Speaker's, and some of them two or three, though the streets are too narrow to use them in the town; but they take the air in them, and their chairs carry them to the gates. The liveries are all plain: gold or silver being forbidden to be worn within the walls, the habits are all obliged to be black, but they wear exceedingly fine lace and linen; and in their country-houses, which are generally in the fauxbourg, they dress very richly, and have extremely fine jewels. Here is nothing cheap but houses. A palace fit for a prince may be hired for fifty pounds per annum: I mean unfurnished. All games of chance are strictly prohibited, and it seems to me the only law they do not try to evade: they play at quadrille, picquet, etc., but not high. Here are no regular public assemblies. I have been visited by all of the first rank, and invited to several fine dinners, particularly to the wedding of one of the House of Spinola, where there were ninety-six sat down to table, and I think the entertainment one of the finest I ever saw. There was the night following a ball and supper for the same company, with the same profusion. They tell me that all their great marriages are kept in the same public manner. Nobody keeps more than two horses, all their journeys being post; the expense of them, including the coachman, is (I am told) fifty pounds per annum. A chair is very nearly as much; I give eighteen francs a-week for mine. The senators can converse with no strangers during the time of their magistracy, which lasts two years. The number of servants is regulated, and almost every lady has the same, which is two footmen, a gentleman-usher, and a page, who follow her chair.

Geneva, Oct. 12, 1741.

I ARRIVED here last night, where I find every thing quite different from what it was represented to me: it is not the first time it has so happened to me on my travels. Every thing is as dear as it is at London. 'Tis true, as all equipages are forbidden, that expense is entirely retrenched. I have been visited this morning by some of the chiefs of the town, who seem extremely good sort of people, which is their general

character; very desirous of attracting strangers to inhabit with them, and consequently very officious in all they imagine can please them. The way of living is absolutely the reverse of that in Italy. Here is no show, and a great deal of eating; there is all the magnificence imaginable, and no dinners but on particular occasions; yet the difference of the prices renders the total expense very nearly equal. As I am not yet determined whether I shall make any considerable stay, I desire not to have the money you intended me, till I ask for it. If you have any curiosity for the present condition of any of the states of Italy, I believe I can give you a truer account than perhaps any other traveller can do, having always had the good fortune of a sort of intimacy with the first persons in the governments where I resided, and they not guarding themselves against the observations of a woman, as they would have done from those of a man.

Geneva, Nov. 5, 1741. N. S.

I HAVE been here a month; I have wrote to you three times without hearing from you, and cannot help being uneasy at your silence. I think this air does not agree with my health. I have had a return of many complaints from which I had an entire cessation during my stay in Italy, which makes me incline to return thither, though a winter journey over the Alps is very disagreeable. The people here are very well to be liked, and this little republic has an air of the simplicity of old Rome in its earliest age. The magistrates toil with their own hands, and their wives literally dress their dinners against their return from their little senate. Yet without dress or equipage 't is as dear living here for a stranger as in places where one is obliged to both, from the price of all sort of provision, which they are forced to buy from their neighbours, having almost no land of their own. I am very impatient to hear from you. Here are many reports concerning the English affairs, which I am sometimes splenetic enough to give credit to.

Chambery, Nov. 30, 1741, N. S.

I RECEIVED this morning yours of October 26, which has taken me out of the uneasiness of fearing for your health. I suppose you know before this the Spaniards are landed at different ports in Italy, etc. When I received early information of the design, I had the charity to mention it to the English consul (without naming my informer); he laughed, and answered it was impossible. This may serve for a small spe-

cimen of the general good intelligence our wise ministry have of all foreign affairs. If you were acquainted with the people whom they employ, you would not be surprised at it. Except Mr. Villette at Turin (who is a very reasonable man), there is not one of them who knows any thing more of the country they inhabit, than that they eat and sleep in it. I have wrote you word that I left Geneva on the sharpness of the air, which much disagreed with me. I find myself better here, though the weather is very cold at present. Yet this situation is not subject to those terrible winds which reign at Geneva. I dare write you no news, though I hear a great deal. Direct to me at Chambery *en Savoye, par Paris.*

Chambery, Dec. 22, 1741.

I HAVE not heard from you since I came to this place; but I think it very possible the letters may have miscarried: at this crisis all are suspected and opened, and consequently often lost. I send this by way of Geneva, and desire you would direct thither for me, recommended to Monsieur Guillaume Boisier.

The company here is very good and sociable; and I have reason to believe the air is the best in the world, if I am to form a judgment of it from the health and long life of the inhabitants. I have half a dozen friends, male and female, who are all of them near or past fourscore, who look and go about as if they were but forty. The provisions of all sorts are extremely good, and the wine is, I think, the most agreeable I ever tasted; and though the ground is now covered with snow, I know nobody troubled with colds, and I observe very few chronical distempers. The greatest inconvenience of the country is the few tolerable rides that are to be picked out, the roads being all mountainous and stony; however, I have got a little horse, and sometimes ramble about after the manner of the Duchess of Cleveland, which is the only fashion of riding here.

I am very impatient to hear from you, and hope your business does not injure your health.

Chamberry, Jan. 25, 1741-2.

I HAD the pleasure of receiving yours of Nov. 25 yesterday, and am very glad to find by it that you are arrived in London in good health. I heartily wish you the continuance of it. My deafness lasted only a fortnight, though it frighted me very much. I have had no return of it since. Your advice to Mr. M. was certainly right, but I am not surprised he did not follow it. I believe there are few men in the world (I never

knew any) capable of such a strength of resolution as yourself. I have answered your letter from Vienna, but as you do not mention having received mine, perhaps it is lost. I shall add a word or two more concerning the use of Turkish wheat. It is generally declaimed against by all the doctors; and some of them have wrote treatises to show the ill consequences of it, in which they say, that since it has been sown (which is not above 100 years, it may be proved from the registers that the mortality is greater amongst the country people than it was formerly. I believe that may be true in regard to children, who are apt to eat greedily, it being very heavy of digestion; but to those whose stomachs can bear it, and eat it with moderation, I am persuaded it is a clean strengthening diet. I have made strict observation and enquiries on the health and manner of life of the countries in which I have resided, and have found little difference in the length of life. It is true, gout, stone, and small-pox (so frequent with us), are little known here: in recompense, pleurisies, peripneumonies, and fevers (especially malignant), are far more usual: and I am clearly of opinion that, if an exact computation were made, as many die in Brescia as in London, in proportion to the different numbers. I have not heard from my daughter for a long time; which may be occasioned by the bad weather. I hope both you and she are well. I have wrote to her many long letters.

FROM MR. WORTLEY TO LADY MARY.

22nd March, 1741-2.

Our son embarked at Harwich on the 10th, after having been in England about three months. I hear he avoided the sharpers, and is grown a good manager of his money. But his weakness is such that Mr. Gibson with much difficulty prevailed with him to go back; and he writ a letter as if he was afraid he should come hither again unless he was soon advised what to do. He declares as if he wanted to be in the army, unless something more for his advantage is proposed, and I have said to Mr. G. I will not oppose his going into the army as a volunteer, but that I believe he may take some course more to his advantage. I hear my Lord Carteret, with whom he has been more than once, speaks well of his behaviour. But his obstinacy in staying here, and what he writes, incline me to think it will not be easy to persuade him to follow good advice. I cannot imagine any body is so likely as yourself to give an impartial account of him. Under this difficulty, I can think of no better

expedient than to advise him to apply to you for leave to come to some place where you may converse with him. If you appoint him to be at a place twenty miles or farther from that where you choose to reside, and order him to go by a feigned name, you may easily reach him in a post-chaise, and come back after you have passed a week where he is. And this you may do more than once, to make a full trial of him. And I wish he might stay within a certain distance of you, till you have given an account of him, and have agreed to what is fixed between him and you.

He declares he sets his heart on being in England, but then he should give me such proofs as I require, that he is able to persevere in behaving like a reasonable man. These proofs may be agreed on between you and me, and I believe I shall readily agree to what you shall think right.

I think you should say nothing to him but in the most calm and gentle way possible, that he may be invited to open himself to you freely. He seems, I hear, shocked at your letter, in which you complained of his not regarding the truth, though I believe you made no mistake in it, unless your saying his marriage could not be dissolved. He knows very well it may by act of parliament, which is what he means when he writes he wants to be quit of his wife. He denies that he knew Birtles to be nephew to Henshaw who lent the 200*l*. As he is commended by several here, and by more in Holland (who perhaps flatter him), it may be wrong to speak to him with any show of warmth or anger.

I incline to think he has been made an enthusiast in Holland, and you would do well to try thoroughly whether he is in earnest, and likely to continue so. If he is, I need not mention how much caution should be used in speaking to him. I think, whatever his notions are, you would do well to say nothing to him, but what you would say before any company.

I shall advise him by Mr. G. to go to Langres, or some place near it, where he may wait for your answer to such letter as he writes for leave to come to any place you shall appoint him.

I shall give you fuller instructions about him in a post or two, if not by this. I hope this affair will not be very troublesome to you, as you can retire from him whenever you please. He shall not have much more money than is sufficient to carry him to you. When you have furnished him with any, it shall be made good to you.

To tell you fully what I judge of him from the variety of accounts I have had, I incline to think he will for the future avoid thieves, and be no ill manager of his money. These, you will

say, are great amendments. But I believe he will always appear a weak man. The single question seems to be whether he will be one of those weak men that will follow the advice of those who wish them well, or be governed by his own fancies, or companions that will make a prey of him. In Holland he seems to have followed the advice of Captain Leutslager and other persons of good credit. I believe he has been in no company here this last time but men of good credit, and I hear he values himself upon it. I have not heard so much as I hope I shall in a week, of the opinion of those who conversed with him. If you have patience to pass away hours with him, you will know him better than any one.

I need not recommend to you the discoursing with him fully upon his patience, and his observing his promises strictly.

Mr. Gibson says his whole deportment and conversation is entirely different from what it was when he was here above four years ago, and that he seems another man.

To give you all the light I can into him, I send you letters writ to him by Captain Leutslager and others. I also send you extracts of his own letters, to show you how he has acted contrary to his professions. I doubt you will find him quite obstinate for going into the army, unless he may be quite certain of mending his circumstances some other way. He may perhaps speak of promises I made him by Mr. G.; but I made none, but that I would let him know by Mr. G. what I advised him to do as preferable to his going to the army. What I meant was his discoursing with you, if you allowed him, and his following your advice.

That you may have the state of the case more fully, I send you his letter to Mr. G., which came by the last mail, and a copy of that which Mr. G. will send him to-morrow.

Mr. G. told me our son thought it hard usage that orders should be given to confine him in Holland, and told Mr. G. that whenever he kept much company it would be right to get him confined, to prevent his going to the pillory or to the gallows.

As he excuses his coming over by the uneasiness he was under, I gave Mr. G. these words:

"The excuse of the uneasiness you should be under in doing right, is the same excuse which is constantly used by all murderers and robbers, and seems to have been taught you by the infamous company by which you were influenced when you was here above four years ago."

Mr. G. said these words were too strong for him to write, and changed them for a paragraph of his own, by which he says

he means the same thing. He agreed it would be quite right in you to use these strong words; but you may do it in a gentle way.

He may have more cunning than is imagined to gain his points, and perhaps is *not* made uneasy by being abroad, and may have little or no inclination to go into the army, but thinks, to prevent it, I may give him some considerable advantage. If you seem not at all averse to his going, perhaps he will of himself quit that scheme, and go into some other that you may like better.

If you think it best he should make a campaign, you will take care not to detain him too long. Perhaps you may recommend him to our minister at Turin, that he may serve in the Sardinian forces, where, if he should do wrong, it will be less known than if he did it in Flanders.

Perhaps, by another name, he might meet you unobserved at Lyons, or Pont Beauvoisin. I need not mention that whatever money you put into his hands shall be repaid you at demand. If he goes back to Holland, I suppose 20l. is enough for his charges.

I have yours of the 24th February. Lord and Lady Bute seem to live well together. They lost their son (who was above a year old) on the 16th; he had fits and a fever. The surgeons say his brains were too large, and occasioned the fits.

They are both retired to Richmond for ten days or a fortnight.

TO MR. WORTLEY.

Lyons, April 13, N. S. 1742.

I HAVE this minute received four letters from you, dated Feb. 1, Feb. 22, March 22, March 29th. I fancy their lying so long in the post-office may proceed from your forgetting to frank them, which I am informed is quite necessary. I am very glad you have been prevailed on to let our son take a commission; if you had prevented it, he would have always said, and perhaps thought, and persuaded other people, you had hindered his rising in the world; though I am fully persuaded that he can never make a tolerable figure in any station of life. When he was at Morins, on his first leaving France, I then tried to prevail with him to serve the Emperor as volunteer; and represented to him that a handsome behaviour one campaign might go a great way in retrieving his character; and offered to use my interest with you (which I said I had no doubt would succeed) to furnish him with a handsome equipage. He then answered, he supposed I wished him killed out of the

way. I am afraid his pretended reformation is not very sincere. I wish time may prove me in the wrong. I here enclose the last letter I received from him; I answered it the following post, in these words:

"I am very glad you resolve to continue obedient to your father, and are sensible of his goodness towards you. Mr. Birtles showed me your letter to him, in which you enclosed yours to me, where you speak to him as your friend; subscribing yourself his faithful humble servant. He was at Genoa in his uncle's house when you was there, and well acquainted with you; though you seem ignorant of every thing relating to him. I wish you would not make such sort of apologies for any errors you may commit. I pray God your future behaviour may redeem the past, which will be a great blessing to your affectionate mother."

I have not since heard from him; I suppose he knew not what to say to so plain a detected falsehood. It is very disagreeable to me to converse with one, from whom I do not expect to hear a word of truth, and who, I am very sure, will repeat many things that never passed in our conversation. You see the most solemn assurances are not binding from him, since he could come to London in opposition to your commands, after having so frequently protested he would not move a step but by your order. However, as you insist on my seeing him, I will do it, and think Valence the properest town for that interview; it is but two days' journey from this place, it is in Dauphiné. I arrived here Friday night, having left Chambery on the report of the French designing to come soon thither. So far is certain, that the governor had given command for repairing the walls, etc.; on which men were actually employed when I came away. But the court of Turin is so politic and mysterious, it is hard to judge; and I am apt to believe their designs change according to circumstances.

I shall stay here till I have an answer to this letter. If you order your son to go to Valence, I desire you would give him a strict command of going by a feigned name. I do not doubt your returning me whatever money I may give him; but as I believe if he receives money from me, he will be making me frequent visits, it is clearly my opinion that I should give him none. Whatever you may think proper for his journey, you may remit him.

I am very sorry for my daughter's loss, being sensible how much it may affect her. I suppose it will be soon repaired. It is a great pleasure to me when I hear she is happy. I wrote to her last post, and will write again the next.

Since I wrote, I have looked everywhere for my son's letter, which I find has been mislaid in the journey. There is nothing more in it than long professions of doing nothing but by your command; and a positive assertion that he was ignorant of Mr. Birtles' relation to the late consul.

Direct your next, *recommandé à Mr. Imbert, Banquier, à Lyons.*

April 25, N. S. Lyons, 1742.

On recollection (however inconvenient it may be to me), I am not sorry to converse with my son. I shall at least have the satisfaction of making a clear judgment of his behaviour and temper; which I shall deliver to you in the most sincere and unprejudiced manner. You need not apprehend that I shall speak to him in passion. I do not know that I ever did in my life. I am not apt to be overheated in discourse, and am so far prepared, even for the worst on his side, that I think nothing he can say can alter the resolution I have taken of treating him with calmness. Both reason and interest (were I inclined to follow blindly the dictates of either) would determine me to wish him your heir rather than a stranger; but I think myself obliged both by honour and by conscience, and my regard for you, no way to deceive you; and I confess, hitherto I see nothing but falsehood and weakness through his whole conduct. It is possible his person may be altered since I saw him, but his figure then was very agreeable and his manner insinuating. I very well remember the professions he made to me, and do not doubt he is lavish of them to other people. Perhaps Lord Carteret may think him no ill match for an ugly girl that sticks on his hands. The project of breaking his marriage shows at least his devotion counterfeit, since I am sensible it cannot be done but by false witness. *His wife is not young enough to get gallants, nor rich enough to buy them.*

I made choice of Valence for our meeting, as a town where we are not likely to find any English, and he may if he pleases be quite unknown; which is hardly possible to be in any capital town either of France or Italy. Here are many English of the trading sort of people, who are more likely to be inquisitive and talkative than any other. Near Chambery there is a little colony of English, who have undertaken the working the mines in Savoy; in which they find very pure silver, of which I have seen several cakes of about eighty ounces each.

May 2nd, Lyons, 1742.

I RECEIVED this morning yours of April 12, and at the same time the enclosed which I send you. 'T is the first I have received since the detection of the falsehood respecting Mr. Birtles. I always sent my letters open, that Mr. Clifford (who had the character of sense and honesty) might be witness of what I said; and he not left at liberty to forge orders he never received. I am very glad I have done so, and am persuaded that had his reformation been what you suppose it, Mr. Clifford would have wrote to me in his favour. I confess I see no appearance of it. His last letter to you, and this to me, seems to be no more in that submissive style he has used, but like one that thinks himself well protected. I will see him, since you desire it, at Valence; which is a by town, where I am less likely to meet with English than in any town in France; but I insist on his going by a feigned name, and coming without a servant. People of superior fortunes to him (to my knowledge) have often travelled from Paris to Lyons in the *diligence;* the expense is but one 300 livres, about 5*l*. sterling, all things paid. It would not be easy to me, at this time, to send him any considerable sum; and whatever it is, I am persuaded, coming from me, he would not be satisfied with it, and make his complaints to his companions. As to the alteration of his temper, I see the same folly throughout. He now supposes (which is downright childish) that one hour's conversation will persuade me of his sincerity. I have not answered his letter, nor will not, till I have your orders what to say to him. Be pleased to direct *recommandé à Mons. Imbert, Banquier, à Lyons.* I received his letter to-day.

May 6, N. S. 1742.

I HERE send you enclosed the letter I mentioned of your son's; the packet in which it was put was mislaid in the journey; it will serve to show you how little he is to be depended on. He saw a Savoyard man of quality at Chambery, who knew him at Venice, and afterwards at Genoa, who asked me (not suspecting him for my son) if he was related to my family. I made answer he was some relation. He told me several tricks of his. He said, that at Genoa he had told him that an uncle of his was dead, and had left him 5 or 6000*l*. per annum, and that he was returning to England to take possession of his estate; in the mean time he wanted money; and would have borrowed some of him, which he refused. I made answer that he did very well. I have heard of this sort of conduct in

other places; and by the Dutch letters you have sent me I am persuaded he continues the same method of lying; which convinces me that his pretended enthusiasm is only to cheat those that can be imposed upon by it. However, I think he should not be hindered accepting a commission. I do not doubt it will be pawned or sold in a twelvemonth; which will prove to those that now protect him how little he deserves it. I am now at Avignon, which is within one day's journey of Valence. I left Lyons last Thursday, but I have taken care that whatever letters come thither shall be sent to me. I came to this place, not finding myself well at Lyons. I thought this change of air would be serviceable to my health, and find I was not mistaken. All the road is filled with French troops, who expect orders to march into the King of Sardinia's dominions.

I am in great pain for my daughter's situation, fearing that the loss of her son may have some ill effect on her present condition. I beg you will let me know the minute she is brought to bed.

Avignon, May 23rd, N. S. 1742.

I RECEIVED this morning yours of April 12 and 29th, and at the same time one from my son from Paris, dated the 4th instant. I have wrote to him this day, that on his answer I will immediately set out for Valence, and shall be glad to see him there. I suppose you are now convinced I have never been mistaken in his character; which remains unchanged, and, what is still worse, I think is unchangeable. I never saw such a complication of folly and falsity as is in his letter to Mr. G. Nothing is cheaper than living in an inn in a country town in France; they being obliged to ask no more than 25 sous for dinner, and 30 for supper and lodging, of those that eat at the public table; which all the young men of quality I have met have always done. It is true I am forced to pay double, because I think the decency of my sex confines me to eat in my own chamber. I will not trouble you with detecting a number of other falsehoods that are in his letters. My opinion on the whole (since you give me leave to tell it) is, that if I was to speak in your place, I would tell him, "That since he is obstinate in going into the army, I will not oppose it; but as I do not approve, I will advance no equipage till I know his behaviour to be such as shall deserve my future favour. Hitherto he has always been directed, either by his own humour, or by the advice of those he thought better friends to him than myself. If he renounces the army, I will continue to him his former allowance; notwithstanding his repeated disobedience,

under the most solemn professions of duty. When I see him act like a sincere honest man, I shall believe well of him; the opinion of others, who either do not know him or are imposed on by his pretences, weighs nothing with me."

Avignon, May 30, N. S. 1742.

I RECEIVED this day yours of May 3rd. I have wrote to let my son know I am ready to see him at Valence, on the first notice of his setting out. I think it very improbable that Lord Stair should make him any such promise as he told Mrs. Anderson, or even give him hopes of it. If he had any right notions, Paris is the last place he would have appeared in; since I know he owes Knight money, and perhaps other people. I am glad of my daughter's health, and hope you enjoy yours.

Avignon, June 10, N. S. 1742.

I AM just returned from passing two days with our son, of whom I will give you the most exact account I am capable of. He is so much altered in person, I should scarcely have known him. He has entirely lost his beauty, and looks at least seven years older than he did; and the wildness that he always had in his eyes is so much increased it is downright shocking, and I am afraid will end fatally. He is grown fat, but he is still genteel, and has an air of politeness that is agreeable. He speaks French like a Frenchman, and has got all the fashionable expressions of that language, and a volubility of words which he always had, and which I do not wonder should pass for wit, with inconsiderate people. His behaviour is perfectly civil, and I found him very submissive; but in the main, no way really improved in his understanding, which is exceedingly weak; and I am convinced he will always be led by the person he converses with either right or wrong, not being capable of forming any fixed judgment of his own. As to his enthusiasm, if he had it, I suppose he has already lost it; since I could perceive no turn of it in all his conversation. But with his head I believe it is possible to make him a monk one day and a Turk three days after. He has a flattering insinuating manner, which naturally prejudices strangers in his favour. He began to talk to me in the usual silly cant I have so often heard from him, which I shortened by telling him I desired not to be troubled with it; that professions were of no use where actions were expected; and that the only thing could give me hopes of a good conduct was regularity and truth. He very readily agreed to all I said (as indeed he has always done

when he has not been hot-headed). I endeavoured to convince him how favourably he has been dealt with, his allowance being much more than, had I been his father, I would have given in the same case. The Prince of Hesse, who is now married to the Princess of England, lived some years at Geneva on 500*l.* per annum. Lord Hervey sent his son at sixteen thither, and to travel afterwards, on no larger pension than 200*l.*; and, though without a governor, he had reason enough, not only to live within the compass of it, but carried home little presents to his father and mother, which he showed me at Turin. In short, I know there is no place so expensive, but a prudent single man may live in it on one 300*l.* per annum, and an extravagant one may run out ten thousand in the cheapest. Had you (said I to him) thought rightly, or would have regarded the advice I gave you in all my letters, while in the little town of Islestein, you would have laid up 150*l.* per annum; you would now have had 750*l.* in your pocket, which would have almost paid your debts, and such a management would have gained you the esteem of the reasonable part of the world. I perceived this reflection, which he had never made himself, had a very great weight with him. He would have excused part of his follies, by saying Mr. G. had told him it became Mr. W.'s son to live handsomely. I answered, that whether Mr. G. had said so or no, the good sense of the thing was no way altered by it; that the true figure of a man was the opinion the world had of his sense and probity, and not the idle expenses, which were only respected by foolish and ignorant people; that his case was particular, he had but too publicly shown his inclination to vanities, and the most becoming part he could now act would be owning the ill use he had made of his father's indulgence, and professing to endeavour to be no farther expense to him, instead of scandalous complaints, and being always at his last shirt and last guinea, which any man of spirit would be ashamed to own. I prevailed so far with him that he seemed very willing to follow this advice; and I gave him a paragraph to write to G., which I suppose you will easily distinguish from the rest of his letter. He asked me whether you had settled your estate. I made answer that I did not doubt (like all other wise men) you always had a will by you; but that you had certainly not put any thing out of your power to change. On that he began to insinuate, that if I could prevail on you to settle the estate on him, I might expect any thing from his gratitude. I made him a very clear and positive answer in these words: "I hope your father will outlive me, and if I should be so un-

fortunate to have it otherwise, I do not believe he will leave me in your power. But was I sure of the contrary, no interest, nor no necessity, shall ever make me act against my honour and conscience; and I plainly tell you, that I will never persuade your father to do any thing for you till I think you deserve it." He answered by great promises of good behaviour, and economy. He is highly delighted with the prospect of going into the army; and mightily pleased with the good reception he had from Lord Stair: though I find it amounts to no more than telling him he was sorry he had already named his aides-de-camp, and otherwise should have been glad of him in that post. He says Lord Carteret has confirmed to him his promise of a commission.

The rest of his conversation was extremely gay. The various things he has seen has given him a superficial universal knowledge. He really knows most of the modern languages, and if I could believe him, can read Arabic, and has read the Bible in Hebrew. He said it was impossible for him to avoid going back to Paris; but he promised me to lie but one night there, and to go to a town six posts from thence on the Flanders road, where he would wait your orders, and go by the name of Mons. du Durand, a Dutch officer; under which name I saw him. These are the most material passages, and my eyes are so much tired I can write no more at this time. I gave him 240 livres for his journey.

Oct. 18, 1743.

I RECEIVED yours of September 21, O. S. this day, October 18, N. S., and am always glad to hear of your health. I can never be surprised at any sort of folly or extravagance of my son. Immediately on leaving me at Orange, after the most solemn promises of reformation, he went to Montelimart, which is but one day's post from thence, where he behaved himself with as much vanity and indiscretion as ever. I had my intelligence from people who did not know my relation to him; and I do not trouble you with the particulars, thinking it needless to expose his character to you, who are so well acquainted with it. I am persuaded whoever protects him will be very soon convinced of the impossibility of his behaving like a rational creature.

I know the young Lady Carlisle, she is very agreeable; but if I am not mistaken in her inclinations, they are very gay. Lady Oxford wrote to me last post, that Lord Strafford was then with her; she informs me that the Duke of Argyle is in a very bad state of health. I hope you will take care to preserve yours.

Nov. 20. N. S. 1743.

I HAVE just received yours of October 24, O.S. and am always very glad to hear of the continuance of your health. As to my son's behaviour at Montelimart, it is nothing more than a proof of his weakness; and how little he is to be depended on in his most solemn professions. He told me that he had made acquaintance with a lady on the road, who has an assembly at her house at Montelimart, and that she had invited him thither. I asked immediately if she knew his name. He assured me no, and that he passed for a Dutch officer by the name of Durand. I advised him not to go thither, since it would raise a curiosity concerning him, and I was very unwilling it should be known I had conversed with him, on many accounts. He gave me the most solemn assurances that no mortal should know it; and agreed with me in the reasons I gave him for keeping it an entire secret; yet rid straight to Montelimart, where he told at the assembly that he came into this country purely on my orders, and that I had stayed with him two days at Orange; talking much of my kindness to him, and insinuating that he had another name, much more considerable than that he appeared with. I knew nothing of this, 'till several months after, that a lady came hither, and meeting her, she asked me if I was acquainted with Mr. Durand. I had really forgot he had ever taken that name, and made answer no; and that if such a person mentioned me, it was possibly some *chevalier d'industrie* who sought to introduce himself into company by a supposed acquaintance with me. She made answer, that the whole town believed so, by the improbable tales he told them; and informed me what he said; by which I knew, what I have related to you. I expect your orders in relation to his letters.

Jan. 12, N. S. Avignon, 1743-4.

I HAVE received yours of the 22nd December, half an hour ago. I always answer your letters the same post I receive them, if they come early enough to permit it; not, the post following. I am much mortified that you have not received two I have wrote, and in the last a letter inclosed for my son. I cannot help being very much concerned at the continual trouble he is to you, though I have no reason to expect better of him. I am persuaded the flattery of G. does him a great deal of harm. I know G.'s way of thinking enough, not to depend on any thing he says to his advantage; much less on any account he gives of himself. I think 't is an ill sign that you have had no letter from Sir John Cope, concerning him. I do not doubt he would

be glad to commend his conduct if there was any room for it. It is my opinion he should have no distinction, in equipage, from any other cornet; and every thing of that sort will only serve to show his vanity, and consequently heighten his folly. Your indulgence has always been greater to him than any other parent's would have been in the same circumstances. I have always said so, and thought so. If any thing can alter him, it will be thinking firmly, that he has no dependance but on his own conduct for a future maintenance.

Avignon, June 1, 1743.

I HOPE you will take care not to return to London, while it is in this unhealthy state. We are now very clear in these parts. Mrs. Bosville is gone to Turin, where they intend to reside; she had the good fortune to meet an English man-of-war on the coast, without which she would have found the passage very difficult. She had so much her journey at heart, that she undertook to ride over the mountains from Nissa to Savona, but I believe (notwithstanding her youth and spirit) would have found the execution impossible. She has chosen the most agreeable court in Europe, where the English are extremely caressed. But it is necessary to be young and gay for such projects. All mine terminate in quiet; and if I can end my days without great pain, it is the utmost of my ambition. All the English without distinction see the Duke of Ormond: Lord Chesterfield (1) (who you know is related to him) lay at his house during his stay in this town; and to say truth, nobody can be more insignificant. He keeps an assembly where all the best company go twice in the week: I have been there sometimes, nor is it possible to avoid it while I stay here; I came hither not knowing where else to be secure, there being, at that time, strong appearances of an approaching rupture with France, and all Italy being in a flame. The Duke lives here in great magnificence, is quite inoffensive, seems to have forgotten every part of his past life, and to be of no party; and indeed this is perhaps the town in the whole world, where politics are the least talked of.

(1) Lord Chesterfield was not properly related to the Duke of Ormond. Lady Elizabeth Butler, daughter to James Duke of Ormond, was the second wife of Lord Chesterfield's grandfather, Philip the second Earl of Chesterfield: but by her he had no children that suvrived, except a daughter married to the fourth Earl of Strathmore. Lord Chesterfield was the grandson of the third wife, Lady Elizabeth Dormer, daughter of Charles Earl of Carnarvon.

Avignon, Dec. 20, 1743.

I RECEIVED yours of the 24th of November, O. S. yesterday. You may, perhaps, hear of a trifle which makes a great noise in this part of the world, which is, that I am building; but the whole expense which I have contracted for is but twenty-six pounds. You know the situation of this town is on the meeting of the Rhone and Durance. On the one side of it within the walls, was formerly a fortress built on a very high rock; they say it was destroyed by lightning: one of the towers was left partly standing, the walls being a yard in thickness: this was made use of for some time as a public mill, but the height making it inconvenient for the carriage of meal, it has stood useless many years. Last summer in the hot evenings, I walked often thither, where I always found a fresh breeze, and the most beautiful land prospect I ever saw (except Wharncliffe); being a view of the windings of two great rivers, and overlooking the whole country, with part of Languedoc and Provence. I was so much charmed with it, that I said in company that, if that *old mill* were mine, I would turn it into a belvidere; my words were repeated, and the two consuls waited on me soon after, with a donation from the town of the mill and the land about it: I have added a dome to it, and made it a little rotunda for the 'foresaid sum. I have also amused myself with patching up an inscription, which I have communicated to the Archbishop, who is much delighted with it; but it is not placed, and perhaps never will be.

(1) "Hic, viator! sub Lare parvulo,
Maria hic est condita, hic jacet,
Defuncta humani laboris
Sorte, supervacuaque vitâ.
Non indecorâ pauperie nitens,
Et non inerti nobilis otio,
Vanoque dilectis popello
Divitiis animosus hostis.
Possis et illam dicere mortuam,
En terra jam nunc quantula sufficit!
Exempta sit curis, viator,
Terra sit illa levis, precare!
Hic sparge flores, sparge breves rosas:
Nam vita gaudet mortua floribus:
Herbisque odoratis corona
Vatis, adhuc cinerem calentem."

(1) Lady Mary had the merit of applying Cowley's "Epitaphium vivi auctoris" published in his works, of which this is a copy, with grammatical alteration where necessary.

Avignon, Feb. 17, 1743-4.

I AM sorry you have given yourself so much trouble about the inscription. I find I expressed myself ill, if you understood by my letter that it was already placed; I never intended it without your approbation, and then would have put it in the inside of the dome. The word "pauperie" is meant, as is shown by the whole line

"Non indecorâ pauperie nitens,"

to be a life rather distant from ostentation than in poverty; and which very well answers to my way of living, which, though decent, is far from the show which many families make here. The nobility consists of about two hundred houses: among them are two dukes, those of Crillon and Guadagna; the last an Italian family, the other French. The Count of Suze, who values himself very much upon his pedigree, keeps a constant open table, as likewise several others. You will judge by that the provisions are exceedingly cheap; but for strangers the price of every thing is high. As all the gentlemen keep their lands in their own hands, and sell their corn, wine, and oil, their house-keeping looks very great, at a small expense. They have every sort of *gibier* from their own estates, which have never been taxed, the Pope drawing (as I am informed) no revenue from hence. The Vice-legate has a court of priests, and sees little other company; which, I believe, is partly owing to the little respect the nobility show him, who despise his want of birth. There is a new one expected this spring, nephew to Cardinal Acquaviva: he is young, and, they say, intends to live with great magnificence.

Avignon was certainly no town in the time of the Romans; nor is there the smallest remains of any antiquity, but what is entirely Gothic. The town is large but thinly peopled; here are fourteen large convents, besides others. It is so well situated for trade, and the silk so fine and plentiful that if they were not curbed, the French not permitting them to trade, they would certainly ruin Lyons; but as they can sell none of their manufactures out of the walls of the town, and the ladies here, as everywhere else, preferring foreign stuffs to their own, the tradespeople are poor, and the shops ill furnished. The people of quality all affect the French manner of living; and here are many good houses. The climate would be as fine as that of Naples, if they were not persecuted by the north wind, which is almost a constant plague; yet by the great age of the inhabitants, and the surprising health which I see many of them enjoy, I am persuaded

the air is very wholesome. I see some of both sexes past eighty, who appear in all the assemblies, eat great suppers, and keep late hours, without any visible infirmity. It is to-day Shrove Tuesday, and I am invited to sup at the Duchess of Crillon's; where I shall meet near fifty guests, who will all of them, young and old, except myself, go masked to the ball, that is given in the town house. It is the sixth given this carnival by the gentlemen *gratis*. At the first there were 1200 tickets given out, many coming from the neighbouring towns of Carpentaras, Lisle, Orange, etc. and even Aix and Arles, on purpose to appear there. Don Philip is expected here on the 22nd: I believe he will not stay any time; and if he should, I think in my present situation it would be improper for me to wait on him. If he goes into company, I suppose that I may *indifferently* see him at an assembly.

Avignon, 23rd March, 1744.

I TAKE this opportunity of informing you, in what manner I came acquainted with the secret I hinted at in my letter of the 5th of February. The society of Freemasons at Nismes presented the Duke of Richelieu, governor of Languedoc, with a magnificent entertainment; it is but one day's post from hence, and the Duchess of Crillon, with some other ladies of this town, resolved to be at it, and almost by force carried me with them, which I am tempted to believe an act of Providence, considering my great reluctance, and the service it proved to be to the unhappy innocent people. The greater part of the town of Nismes are serious Protestants, which are still secretly punished according to the edicts of Lewis XIV. whenever they are detected in any public worship. A few days before we came, they had assembled; their minister and about a dozen of his congregation were seized and imprisoned. I knew nothing of this; but I had not been in the town two hours, when I was visited by two of the most considerable of the Huguenots, who came to beg of me, with tears, to speak in their favour to the Duke of Richelieu, saying none of the Catholics would do it, and the Protestants dared not. The Duke of Richelieu was too well-bred to refuse to listen to a lady, and I was of a rank and nation to have liberty to say what I pleased; they moved my compassion so much, I resolved to use my endeavour to serve them, though I had little hope of succeeding. I would not therefore dress myself for the supper, but went in a domino to the ball, a masque giving opportunity of talking in a freer manner than I could have done, without it. I was at

no trouble in engaging his conversation: the lady having told him I was there, he immediately advanced towards me; and I found, from different motives, he had a great desire to be acquainted with me, having heard a great deal of me. After abundance of compliments of that sort, I made my request for the liberty of the poor Protestants; he with great freedom told me he was so little a bigot, that he pitied them as much as I did, but his orders from court were to send them to the galleys. However, to show how much he desired my good opinion, he was returning, and would solicit their freedom (which he has since obtained). This obligation occasioned me to continue the conversation, and he asked me what party the Pretender had in England; I answered, as I thought, a very small one. "We are told otherwise at Paris," said he; "however, a bustle at this time may serve to facilitate our projects, and we intend to attempt a descent; at least it will cause the troops to be recalled, and perhaps Admiral Mathews will be obliged to leave the passage open for Don Philip." You may imagine how much I wished to give immediate notice of this; but as all letters are opened at Paris, it would have been to no purpose to write it by the post, and have only gained me a powerful enemy in the court of France, he being so much a favourite of the King's, that he is supposed to stand candidate for the ministry. In my letter to Sir Robert Walpole from Venice, I offered my service, and desired to know in what manner I could send intelligence, if any thing happened to my knowledge that could be of use to England. I believe he imagined that I wanted some gratification, and only sent me cold thanks. I have wrote to you by the post an account of my servant's leaving me. As that is only a domestic affair, I suppose the letter may be suffered to pass. I have had no letter from him, and am very sure he is in the wrong, whenever he does not follow your direction, who, apart from other considerations, have a stronger judgment than any of his advisers.

TO THE COUNTESS OF ——. (1)

Saturday—Florence.

I SET out from Bologna the moment I had finished the letter I wrote you on Monday last, and shall now continue to inform you of the things that have struck me most in this excursion. Sad roads—hilly and rocky—between Bologna and Fierenzuola. Between this latter place and Florence, I went out of

(1) Probably written in August 1740. See the letters addressed to Lady Pomfret in v. i, p, 405, and that to Mr. Wortley in v. ii, p. 11.

my road to visit the monastery of La Trappe, which is of French origin, and one of the most austere and self-denying orders I have met with. In this gloomy retreat it gave me pain to observe the infatuation of men, who have devoutly reduced themselves to a much worse condition than that of the beasts. Folly, you see, is the lot of humanity, whether it arises in the flowery paths of pleasure, or the thorny ones of an ill-judged devotion. But of the two sorts of fools, I shall always think that the merry one has the most eligible fate; and I cannot well form a notion of that spiritual and extatic joy, that is mixed with sighs, groans, hunger, and thirst, and the other complicated miseries of monastic discipline. It is a strange way of going to work for happiness to excite an enmity between soul and body, which Nature and Providence have designed to live together in union and friendship, and which we cannot separate like man and wife when they happen to disagree. The profound silence that is enjoined upon the monks of La Trappe, is a singular circumstance of their unsociable and unnatural discipline; and were this injunction never to be dispensed with, it would be needless to visit them in any other character than as a collection of statues; but the superior of the convent suspended in our favour that rigorous law, and allowed one of the mutes to converse with me, and answer a few discreet questions. He told me that the monks of this order in France are still more austere than those of Italy, as they never taste wine, flesh, fish, or eggs; but live entirely upon vegetables. The story that is told of the institution of this order is remarkable, and is well attested, if my information be good. Its founder was a French nobleman whose name was Bouthillier de Rancé, a man of pleasure and gallantry, which were converted into the deepest gloom of devotion by the following incident. His affairs obliged him to absent himself, for some time, from a lady with whom he had lived in the most intimate and tender connections of successful love. At his return to Paris, he proposed to surprise her agreeably, and, at the same time, to satisfy his own impatient desire of seeing her, by going directly and without ceremony to her apartment by a back stair, which he was well acquainted with—but think of the spectacle that presented itself to him at his entrance into the chamber that had so often been the scene of love's highest raptures! his mistress dead—dead of the small pox—disfigured beyond expression—a loathsome mass of putrified matter—and the surgeon separating the head from the body, because the coffin had been made too short! He stood for a moment motionless in amazement, and filled with horror—and then re-

tired from the world, shut himself up in the convent of La Trappe, where he passed the remainder of his days in the most cruel and disconsolate devotion.—Let us quit this sad subject.

I must not forget to tell you that before I came to this monastery I went to see the burning mountain near Fierenzuola, of which the naturalists speak as a great curiosity. The flame it sends forth is without smoke, and resembles brandy set on fire. The ground about it is well cultivated, and the fire appears only in one spot where there is a cavity whose circumference is small, but in it are several crevices whose depths are unknown. It is remarkable that when a piece of wood is thrown into this cavity, though it cannot pass through the crevices, yet it is consumed in a moment, and that though the ground about it be perfectly cold, yet if a stick be rubbed with any force against it, it emits a flame, which, however, is neither hot nor durable like that of the volcano. If you desire a more circumstantial account of this phenomenon, and have made a sufficient progress in Italian to read Father Carazzi's description of it, you need not be at a loss, for I have sent this description to Mr. F——, and you have only to ask it of him. After observing the volcano, I scrambled up all the neighbouring hills, partly on horseback, partly on foot, but could find no vestige of fire in any of them; though common report would make one believe that they all contain volcanos.

I hope you have not taken it in your head to expect from me a description of the famous gallery here, where I arrived on Thursday at noon; this would be requiring a volume instead of a letter; besides, I have as yet seen but a part of this immense treasure, and I propose employing some weeks more to survey the whole. You cannot imagine any situation more agreeable than Florence. It lies in a fertile and smiling valley watered by the Arno, which runs through the city, and nothing can surpass the beauty and magnificence of its public buildings, particularly the cathedral, whose grandeur filled me with astonishment. The palaces, squares, fountains, statues, bridges, do not only carry an aspect full of elegance and greatness, but discover a taste quite different, in kind, from that which reigns in the public edifices in other countries. The more I see of Italy, the more I am persuaded that the Italians have a stile (if I may use that expression) in every thing, which distinguishes them almost essentially from all other Europeans. Where they have got it, —whether from natural genius or ancient imitation and inheritance, I shall not examine; but the fact is certain. I have been but one day in the gallery, that amazing repository of the

most precious remains of antiquity, and which alone is sufficient to immortalize the illustrious house of Medicis, by whom it was built, and enriched as we now see it. I was so impatient to see the famous Venus of Medicis, that I went hastily through six apartments in order to get a sight of this divine figure, purposing, when I had satisfied this ardent curiosity, to return and view the rest at my leisure. As I, indeed, passed thro' the great room which contains the ancient statues, I was stopped short at viewing the Antinous, which they have placed near that of Adrian, to revive the remembrance of their preposterous loves, which I suppose the Florentines rather look upon as an object of envy, than of horror and disgust. This statue, like that of the Venus de Medicis, spurns description: such figures my eyes never beheld—I can now understand that Ovid's comparing a fine woman to a statue, which I formerly thought a very disobliging similitude, was the nicest and highest piece of flattery. The Antinous is entirely naked; all its parts are bigger than nature; but the whole, taken together, and the fine attitude of the figure, carry such an expression of ease, elegance, and grace, as no words can describe. When I saw the Venus I was wrapped in wonder,—and I could not help casting a thought back upon Antinous. They ought to be placed together. They are worthy of each other.—If marble could see and feel, the separation might be prudent.—If it could only *see*, it would certainly lose its coldness and learn to feel, and in such a case the charms of these two figures would produce an effect quite opposite to that of the Gorgon's head, which turned flesh into stone. Did I pretend to describe to you the Venus, I would only set your imagination at work to form ideas of her figure, and your ideas would no more resemble that figure, than the Portuguese face of Miss N——, who has enchanted our knight, resembles the sweet and graceful countenance of Lady——, his former flame. The description of a face or figure is a needless thing, as it never conveys a true idea; it only gratifies the imagination with a fantastic one, until the real one is seen. So, my dear, if you have a mind to form a true notion of the divine forms and features of the Venus and Antinous, come to Florence.

I would be glad to oblige you and your friend Vertue, by executing your commission with respect to the sketches of Raphael's cartoons at Hampton-court; but I cannot do it to my satisfaction. I have, indeed, seen in the Grand Duke's collection, four pieces, in which that wonderful artist had thrown freely from his pencil the first thoughts and rude lines of some of those compositions; and as the first thoughts of a great ge-

nius are precious, these pieces attracted my curiosity in a particular manner; but when I went to examine them closely, I found them so damaged and effaced, that they did not at all answer my expectation. Whether this be owing to negligence or envy, I cannot say; I mention the latter, because it is notorious that many of the modern painters have discovered ignoble marks of envy at a view of the inimitable productions of the ancients. Instead of employing their art to preserve the masterpieces of antiquity, they have endeavoured to destroy and efface many of them. I have seen with my own eyes an evident proof of this at Bologna, where the greatest part of the paintings in fresco on the walls of the convent of St. Michael in Bosco, done by the Caracci and Guido Rheni, have been ruined by the painters, who after having copied some of the finest heads, scraped them almost entirely out with nails. Thus you see nothing is exempt from human malignity.

The word malignity, and a passage in your letter, call to my mind the wicked wasp of Twickenham: his lies affect me now no more; they will be all as much despised as the story of the seraglio and the handkerchief, of which I am persuaded he was the only inventor. That man has a malignant and ungenerous heart; and he is base enough to assume the mask of a moralist, in order to decry human nature, and to give a decent vent to his hatred of man and woman kind.—But I must quit this contemptible subject, on which a just indignation would render my pen so fertile, that after having fatigued you with a long letter, I should surfeit you with a supplement twice as long. Besides, a violent head-ach advertises me that it is time to lay down my pen and get me to bed. I shall say some things to you in my next that I would have you to impart to the strange man, as from yourself. My mind is at present tolerably quiet; if it were as dead to sin, as it is to certain connexions, I should be a great saint. Adieu, my dear Madam.

Yours very affectionately, etc.

LETTERS

DURING

LADY M. W. MONTAGU'S RESIDENCE ABROAD,

FROM 1746 TO 1757.

TO MR. WORTLEY.

Avignon, May 8, 1744.

I RECEIVED but this morning yours, dated March 22. I suppose this delay has been occasioned by the present disturbances; I do not doubt mine have had the same fate, but I hope you will receive them at length.

I am very well acquainted with Lady Sophia Fermor, (1) having lived two months in the same house with her: she has few equals in beauty, or graces. I shall never be surprised at her conquests. If Lord Carteret had the design you seem to think, he could not make a more proper choice; but I think too well of his understanding to suppose he can expect his happiness from things unborn, or place it in the chimerical notion of any pleasure arising to him, from his name subsisting (perhaps by very sorry representatives) after his death. I am apt to imagine he indulged his inclination at the expense of his judgment; and it appears to me the more pardonable weakness. I end my reflections here, fearing my letter will not come inviolate to your hands.

I am extremely glad my account of Avignon had any thing in it entertaining to you. I have really forgotten what I wrote, my sight not permitting me to take copies: if there are any particulars you would have explained to you, I will do it to the best of my power. I can never be so agreeably employed as in amusing you.

You say nothing of ——. I guess you have nothing good to say.

(1) Eldest daughter of Thomas Earl of Pomfret: she was married to Lord Carteret, afterwards Earl of Granville, in 1744.

I am very much concerned for the ill state of poor Lady Oxford's (1) health: she is the only friend I can depend on in this world (except yourself): she tells me she stays at Welbeck, having been cheated of some thousands by one she employed in her building there, and is very troublesomely engaged in setting things in order.

TO MR. WORTLEY.

Avignon, June 12, N. S. 1744.

I BELIEVE William may tell truth in regard to the expenses of his journey, making it at a time when the passage of the troops had doubled the price of every thing; and they were detained ten days at Calais before they had permission to pass over. I represented these inconveniencies to them before they set out; but they were in such a hurry to go, from a notion that they should be forced to stay, after the declaration of war, that I could not prevail on them to stay a week longer, though it would probably have saved great part of their expense. I would willingly have kept them (with all faults), being persuaded of their fidelity, and that in case of any accident happening to me, you would have had a faithful account of my effects; but it was impossible to make them contented in a country where there is neither ale nor salt beef.

This town is considerably larger than either Aix or Montpelier, and has more inhabitants of quality than of any other sort, having no trade, from the exactions of the French, though better situated for it than any inland town I know. What is most singular is the government, which retains a sort of imitation of the old Roman: here are two consuls chosen every year, the first of whom from the chief noblesse; and there is as much struggling for that dignity in the Hôtel-de-Ville as in the Senate. The Vice-legate cannot violate their privileges. As all governors naturally wish to increase their authority, there are perpetual factions of the same kind as those between prerogative and the liberty of the subject. We have a new Vice-legate, arrived a few days since, nephew to Cardinal Acquaviva, young, rich, and handsome, and sets out in a greater figure than has ever been known here. The magistrate next to him in place is called the Vignier, who is chosen every year by

(1) Lady Henrietta Cavendish Holles, only daughter and heir of John Duke of Newcastle, was married in 1713 to Edward Earl of Oxford. She died December 8, 1755. Her only daughter married William second Duke of Portland.

the Hôtel-de-Ville, and represents the person of the Pope in all criminal causes, but his authority is so often clipped by the Vice-legate, there remains nothing of it at present but the honour of precedence during his office, and a box at the play-house gratis, with the superintendence of all public diversions. When Don Philip passed here, he began the ball with his lady, which is the custom of all princes that pass.

The beginning of Avignon was probably a colony from Marseilles, there having been a temple of Diana on that very spot where I have my little pavilion. If there was any painter capable of drawing it, I would send you a view of the landscape, which is one of the most beautiful I ever saw.

TO MR. WORTLEY.

Avignon, June 8, 1745.

I HAVE this day yours of the 8th of April, O. S. and at the same time one from Lady Oxford, who has not received (as she says) any from me since November, though I have wrote several times.

I perfectly remember carrying back the manuscript you mention, and delivering it to lord Oxford. I never failed returning to himself all the books he lent me. It is true, I showed it to the Duchess of Montagu, but we read it together, and I did not even leave it with her. I am not surprised that in that vast quantity of manuscripts some should be lost or mislaid, particularly knowing Lord Oxford to be careless of them, easily lending, and as easily forgetting he had done it. I remember I carried him once one finely illuminated, that, when I delivered, he did not recollect he had lent to me, though it was but a few days before. Wherever this is, I think you need be in no pain about it. The verses are too bad to be printed, excepting from malice, and since the death of Pope I know nobody that is an enemy to either of us. I will write to my son the first opportunity I have of doing it. By the post it is impossible at this time. I have seen the French list of the dead and wounded, in which he is not mentioned: so that I suppose he has escaped. All letters, even directed to Holland, are opened; and I believe those to the army would be stopped.

I know so little of English affairs, I am surprised to hear Lord Granville(1) has lost his power.

(1) John Carteret, Earl Granville, was secretary of state in 1720, lord-lieutenant of Ireland from 1724 to 1730; in 1742 secretary of state,

TO MR. WORTLEY.

Avignon, November 11, 1745.

I RECEIVED yours of October 15, yesterday, November 11. I was quite frightened at the relation of your indisposition, and am very glad I did not know it till it was over. I hope you will no more suffer the physicians to try experiments with so good a constitution as yours. I am persuaded mineral waters, which are provided by nature, are the best, perhaps the only real remedies, particularly that of Tumbridge, of which I have a great opinion. I would not trouble you with a long letter, which may be uneasy for you to read.

The present weather is esteemed a prodigy in this country. I begin almost to credit the tradition in Herodotus, and believe the world will once again change its position, and Italy change situation with Muscovy.

I have not stirred out of my apartment these two months, although I have no reason to complain of my health: the continuation of yours is my most earnest wish.

TO MR. WORTLEY.

Brescia, Aug. 25, N. S. 1746.

YOU will be surprised at the date of this letter, but Avignon has been long disagreeable to me on many accounts, and now more than ever, from the increase of Scotch and Irish rebels, that chose it for their refuge, and are so highly protected by the Vice-legate, that it is impossible to go into any company without hearing a conversation that is improper to be listened to, and dangerous to contradict. The war with France hindered my settling there for reasons I have already told you; and the difficulty of passing into Italy confined me, though I was always watching an opportunity of returning thither. Fortune at length presented me one.

I believe I wrote you word, when I was at Venice, that I saw there the count of Wacherbarth, who was governor to the Prince of Saxony, and is favourite of the King of Poland, and the many civilities I received from him, as an old friend of his mother's. About a month since, a gentleman of the bedchamber of the Prince, who is a man of the first quality in this province, I believe charged with some private commission from the

which office he resigned in 1744. He was a third time appointed secretary of state in February 1746, and removed on the 14th of the same month, to which circumstance this letter alludes.

Polish court, brought me a letter of recommendation from Count Wacherbarth, which engaged me to show him what civilities lay in my power. In conversation I lamented to him the impossibility of my attempting a journey to Italy, where he was going. He offered me his protection, and represented to me that if I would permit him to wait on me, I might pass under the notion of a Venetian lady. In short, I ventured upon it. which has succeeded very well, though I met with more impediments in my journey than I expected. We went by sea to Genoa, where I made a very short stay, and saw nobody, having no passport from that state, and fearing to be stopped, if I was known. We took post-chaises from thence the 16th of this month, and were very much surprised to meet, on the Briletta, the baggage of the Spanish army, with a prodigious number of sick and wounded soldiers and officers, who marched in a very great hurry. The Count of Palazzo ordered his servants to say we were in haste for the service of Don Philip, and without further examination they gave us place every where: notwithstanding which the multitude of carriages and loaded mules which we met in these narrow roads made it impossible for us to reach Scravalli till it was near night. Our surprise was great to find, coming out of that town, a large body of troops surrounding a body of guards, in the midst of which was Don Philip in person, going a very round trot, looking down, and pale as ashes. The army was in too much confusion to take notice of us, and the night favouring us, we got into the town, but when we came there, it was impossible to find any lodging, all the inns being filled with wounded Spaniards. The Count went to the governor, and asked a chamber for a Venetian lady, which he granted very readily; but there was nothing in it but the bare walls, and in less than a quarter of an hour after the whole house was empty both of furniture and people, the governor flying into the citadel, and carrying with him all his goods and family. We were forced to pass the night without beds, or supper. About day-break the victorious Germans entered the town. The Count went to wait on the generals, to whom, I believe, he had a commission. He told them my name, and there was no sort of honour or civility they did not pay me. They immediately ordered me a guard of hussars (which was very necessary in the present disorder), and sent me refreshments of all kinds. Next day I was visited by the Prince of Badin Dourlach, the Prince Louestein, and all the principal officers, with whom I passed for a heroine, showing no uneasiness though the canon of the citadel (where was a Spanish garrison) played very briskly. I was forced to stay

there two days for want of post-horses, the post-master having fled, with all his servants, and the Spaniards having levied all the horses they could find. At length I set out from thence the 19th instant, with a strong escort of hussars, meeting with no farther accident on the road, except at the little town of Vogherra, where they refused post-horses, till the hussars drew their sabres. The 30th I arrived safe here. It is a very pretty place, where I intend to repose myself at least during the remainder of the summer. This journey has been very expensive; but I am very glad I have made it. I am now in a neutral country, under the protection of Venice. The Doge is our old friend Grimani, and I do not doubt meeting with all sort of civility. When I set out I had so bad a fluxion on my eyes, I was really afraid of losing them: they are now quite recovered, and my health better than it has been for some time. I hope yours continues good, and that you will always take care of it. Direct for me at Brescia by way of Venice.

TO MR. WORTLEY.

Brescia, Sept. 24, N. S. 1746.

I CAN no longer resist the desire I have to know what is become of——.(1) I have long suppressed it from a belief that if there was any thing of good to be told, you would not fail to give me the pleasure of hearing it. I find it now grows so much upon me, that whatever I am to know, I think it would be easier for me to support, than the anxiety I suffer from my doubts. I beg to be informed, and prepare myself for the worst, with all the philosophy I have. At my time of life I ought to be detached from a world which I am soon to leave; to be totally so is a vain endeavour and perhaps there is vanity in the endeavour: while we are human, we must submit to human infirmities, and suffer them in mind as well as body. All that reflection and experience can do is to mitigate, we can never extinguish, our passions. I call by that name every sentiment that is not founded upon reason, and own I cannot justify to mine the concern I feel for one who never gave me any view of satisfaction.

This is too melancholy a subject to dwell upon. You compliment me on the continuation of my spirits: 't is true, I try to maintain them by every act I can, being sensible of the terrible consequences of losing them. Young people are too apt to let them sink on any disappointment. I have wrote to my daughter all the considerations I could think to lessen her affliction. I

(1) Her son.

am persuaded you will advise her to amusement, and am very glad you continue that of travelling as the most useful for health. I have been prisoner here some months, by the weather: the rivers are still impassable in most places; when they are abated, I intend some little excursions, being of your opinion, that exercise is as necessary as food, though I have at present no considerable complaint; my hearing, and I think my memory, are without any decay, and my sight better than I could expect; it shall serve me to read many hours in a day. I have appetite enough to relish what I eat, and have the same sound uninterrupted sleep that has continued throughout the course of my life, and to which I attribute the happiness of not yet knowing the head-ach. I am very sorry you are so often troubled with it, but hope, from your care and temperance, that if you cannot wholly overcome it, yet it may be so far diminished, as not to give you any great uneasiness, or affect your constitution.

TO MR. WORTLEY.

Brescia, Nov. 24, N. S. 1746.

I BRAGGED too soon of my good health, which lasted but two days after my last letter. I was then seized with so violent a fever that I am surprised a woman of my age could be capable of it. I have kept my bed two months, and am now out of it but a few hours in the day. I did not mention in my last (thinking it an insignificant circumstance) that Count Palazzo had wrote to his mother (without my knowledge) to advertise her of my arrival. She came to meet me in her coach and six, and it was impossible to resist her importunity of going to her house, where she would keep me, till I had found a lodging to my liking. I had chose one when I wrote to you, and counted upon going there the beginning of the week following, but my violent illness (being, as all the physicians thought, in the utmost danger) made it utterly impossible. The Countess Palazzo has taken as much care of me as if I had been her sister, and omitted no expense or trouble to serve me. I am still with her, and indeed in no condition of moving at present. I am now in a sort of milk diet, which is prescribed me to restore my strength. From being as fat as Lady Bristol, I am grown leaner than any body I can name. For my own part, I think myself in a natural decay. However I do what I am ordered. I know not how to acknowledge enough my obligations to the Countess; and I reckon it a great one from her who is a *dévote*, that she never brought a priest to me. My woman, who is a zealous

French Huguenote, I believe would have tore his eyes out. During my whole illness it seemed her chief concern. I hope your health continues good.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, July 21, N. S. 1747.

DEAR CHILD, —I am now in a place the most beautifully romantic I ever saw in my life: it is the Tunbridge of this part of the world, to which I was sent by the doctor's order, my ague often returning, notwithstanding the loads of bark I have taken. To say truth, I have no reason to repent my journey, though I was very unwilling to undertake it, it being ten miles, half by land, and half by water; the land so stony, I was almost shook to pieces, and I had the ill luck to be surprised with a storm on the lake, that if I had not been near a little port (where I passed a night in a very poor inn), the vessel must have been lost. A fair wind brought me hither next morning early. I found a very good lodging, a great deal of good company, and a village in many respects resembling Tunbridge Wells, not only in the quality of the waters, which is the same, but in the manner of the buildings, most of the houses being separate at little distances, and all built on the sides of hills, which indeed are far different from those of Tunbridge, being six times as high: they are really vast rocks of different figures, covered with green moss, or short grass, diversified by tufts of trees, little woods, and here and there vineyards, but no other cultivation, except gardens like those on Richmond hill. The whole lake of Isco, which is twenty-five miles long, and three broad, is all surrounded with these impassable mountains, the sides of which, towards the bottom, are so thick set with villages (and in most of them gentlemen's seats), that I do not believe there is any where above a mile distance one from another, which adds very much to the beauty of the prospect.

We have an opera here, which is performed three times in the week. I was at it last night, and should have been surprised at the neatness of the scenes, goodness of the voices, and justness of the actors, if I had not remembered I was in Italy. Several gentlemen jumped into the orchestre, and joined in the concert, which I suppose is one of the freedoms of the place, for I never saw it in any great town. I was yet more amazed, (while the actors were dressing for the farce that concludes the entertainment,) to see one of the principal among them, and as errant a *petit maître* as if he had passed all his life at Paris, mount the stage, and present us with a cantata of

his own performing. He had the pleasure of being almost deafened with applause. The ball began afterwards, but I was not witness of it, having accustomed myself to such early hours, that I was half asleep before the opera finished: it begins at ten o'clock, so that it was one before I could get to bed, though I had supped before I went, which is the custom.

I am much better pleased with the diversions on the water, where all the town assembles every night, and never without music; but we have none so rough as trumpets, kettle-drums, and French horns: they are all violins, lutes, mandolins, and flutes doux. Here is hardly a man that does not excel in some of these instruments, which he privately addresses to the lady of his affections, and the public has the advantage of it, by his adding to the number of the musicians.

The fountain where we drink the waters rises between two hanging hills, and is overshadowed with large trees, that give a freshness in the hottest time of the day. The provisions are all excellent, the fish of the lake being as large and well tasted as that of Geneva, and the mountains abounding in game, particularly black cocks, which I never saw in any other part of Italy: but none of the amusements here would be so effectual to raising my spirits as a letter from you. I have received none since that of February 27. I do not blame you for it, but my ill fortune, that will not let me have that consolation. The newspaper informs me that the Chevalier Gray (so he is styled) is appointed minister at Venice. I wish you would let me know who he is, intending to settle our correspondence through his hands. I did not care to ask that favour of Lord Holderness.

Dear child, I am ever your most affectionate mother.

TO MR. WORTLEY.

Louvere, —— 1747.

YOURS of the 1st of December, O. S. came to me this morning, Feb. 2, N. S. I hope your health continues good, since you say nothing to the contrary. I think the Duchess of Manchester's (1) silence is the most reasonable part of her conduct;

(1) The Duchess of Manchester mixed very little with the world after her marriage to Mr. Hussey, one of those nine days' wonders which never fail to put all idle tongues in motion. The satirical lines of Hanbury Williams are well known.

complainers are seldom pitied, and boasters are seldom believed. Her retirement is, in my opinion, no proof either of her happiness or discontent, since her appearance in the world can never be pleasing to her. I was shown at Genoa an ode on Ch. Ch. as a production of Dr. Broxholme. I thought it much in his style, and am apt to believe (from what I know of Sir Charles Hanbury (1)) he is more likely to have the vanity to

> Sunk is her power, her sway is o'er;
> She'll be no more adored—no more
> Shine forth the public care.
> Oh, what a falling off is here
> From her whose frowns made wisdom fear,
> Whose scorn begot despair!

Their worthless author had married a friend of hers, Lady Frances Coningsby, the only child of Lord Coningsby; and he used her as moths that fly into a candle, and heiresses that marry rakes are pretty sure to be used. Something made him suspect the Duchess of spiriting her up to resistance; a piece of hostility which he revenged by levelling at her Grace the shafts of his wit, even before her extraordinary match provoked ridicule. Extraordinary it must be called; yet Mr. Hussey was a gentleman of birth and fortune; and as he descended maternally from the Duchess of Tyrconnel, (Grammont's Belle Jennings, sister to the Duchess of Marlborough,) he was likewise her own relation. But then she stood on the topmost height both of fashion and quality; and had ever piqued herself upon being more delicate, more fastidious, in modern cant more *exclusive*, than the finest of the fine ladies her compeers. In short, she seemed a person, whom few men, and those only of the highest class in situation and talents, might dare to look up to. Therefore her suddenly accepting a wild Irishman, younger than herself, utterly unknown to all her set of company, and differing widely from them in habits and manners, did unavoidably astonish the world, and set the wicked part of it a-laughing. The laugh however was checked when the Irishman, who could build no rhymes, drew his sword in answer to Sir Charles Hanbury's odes; and the wit, absconding, chose to lie concealed till the storm blew over. The Duchess, as it appears from Lady Mary's observations, had the wisdom to be silent about the success of her venture. But, perhaps, the act which diverted her neighbours, secured a reasonable share of happiness for herself; since her husband, without the niceties of refinement, had a warm heart and a high sense of honour, which led him to treat her affectionately; and to show a scrupulous regard to her wishes, even after her decease. He was created Lord Beaulieu in 1762.

(1) Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, according to the report of those who remembered him, was so pompous and heavy in conversation, that some time passed before the world could believe him the author of such lively and spirited verses as the *Satires on Sir Robert Walpole's Successors, etc., etc.*

father it, than the wit to write it. I have seen heaps of his poetry, but nothing to distinguish him from the tribe of common versifiers. The last I saw was an ode addressed to Mr. Dodington on his courtship of the late Duchess of Argyll; those two you mention have never reached me. I should be very much obliged if you would send me copies of them.

The new opera at Brescia, I hear, is much applauded, and intend to see it before the end of the carnival. The people of this province are much at their ease during the miseries the war occasions their neighbours, and employ all their time in diversions.

We have hitherto had no winter, to the great sorrow of the people here, who are in fear of wanting ice in the summer, which is as necessary as bread. They also attribute a malignant fever, which has carried off great numbers in the neighbouring towns, to the uncommon warmth of the air. It has not infected this village, which they say has ever been free from any contagious distemper. The method of treating the physician here, I think, should be the same every where: they make it his interest that the whole parish should be in good health, giving him a stated pension, which is collected by a tax on every house, on condition that he neither demands any fees, nor ever refuses a visit either to rich or poor. This last article would be very hard, if we had as many vapourish ladies as in England; but those imaginary ills are entirely unknown among us, and the eager pursuit after every new piece of quackery that is introduced. I cannot help thinking that there is a fund of credulity in mankind that must be employed somewhere, and the money formerly given to the monks for the health of the soul, is now thrown to doctors for the health of the body, and generally with as little prospect of success.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Brescia, Jan. 5, 1747-8.

DEAR CHILD,—I am glad to hear that yourself and family are in good health; and as to the alteration you find in the world, it is only owing to your being better acquainted with it. I have never in all my various travels seen but two sorts of people, and those very like one another; I mean men and women, who always have been, and ever will be, the same. The same vices and the same follies have been the fruit of all ages, though sometimes under different names. I remember when I returned from Turkey meeting with the same affectation of youth among yours, and I do not doubt but your daughter will find

the same, twenty years hence, among hers. One of the greatest happinesses of youth is the ignorance of evil, though it is often the ground of great indiscretions, and sometimes the active part of life is over, before an honest mind finds out how one ought to act in such a world as this. I am as much removed from it as it is possible to be on this side the grave; which is from my own inclination, for I might have even here a great deal of company; the way of living in this province being, I believe, what it is in the sociable part of Scotland, and was in England a hundred years ago. I had a visit in the holidays of thirty horse of ladies and gentlemen, with their servants (by the way, the ladies all ride like the late Duchess of Cleveland). They came with the kind intent of staying with me at least a fortnight, though I had never seen any of them before; but they were all neighbours within ten miles round. I could not avoid entertaining them at supper, and by good luck had a large quantity of game in the house, which, with the help of my poultry, furnished out a plentiful table. I sent for the fiddles, and they were so obliging as to dance all night, and even dine with me the next day, though none of them had been in bed; and were much disappointed I did not ask them to stay, it being the fashion to go in troops to one another's houses, hunting and dancing together a month in each castle. I have not yet returned any of their visits, and I do not intend it for some time, to avoid this expensive hospitality. The trouble of it is not very great, they not expecting any ceremony. I left the room about one o'clock, and they continued their ball in the saloon above stairs, without being at all offended at my departure. But the greatest diversion I had was to see a lady of my own age comfortably dancing with her own husband, some years older; and I can assert that she jumped and galloped with the best of them.

May you be as well satisfied with your family as you are at present, and your children return in your age the tender care you have taken of their infancy. I know no greater happiness that can be wished for you by your most affectionate mother.

TO MR. WORTLEY.

Louvere, July 17, N. S. 1748.

YOURS of June 7, O. S. came to my hands but yesterday. I am very much vexed and surprised at the miscarriage of my letters. I have never failed answering both yours and my daughter's the very next post after I received them. I began to suspect my servants put the franking money in their pockets,

and threw away the letters. I have been in the country this year and half, though I continued to date from Brescia, as the place to which I would have directed, being, though not the nearest, the safest post-town: I send all my packets thither, and will for the future enclose them to a banker, who I hope will be more careful in forwarding them.

I am glad my daughter's conduct satisfies the opinion I always had of her understanding: I do not wonder at her being well received in sets of company different from one another, having myself preserved a long intimacy with the Duchesses of Marlborough and Montagu, though they were at open war, and perpetually talking of their complaints. I believe they were both sensible I never betrayed either; each of them giving me the strongest proofs of confidence in the last conversations I had with them, which were the last I had in England. What I think extraordinary is my daughter's continuing so many years agreeable to Lord Bute, Mr. Mackensie telling me, the last time I saw him, that his brother frequently said among his companions, that he was still as much in love with his wife as before he married her. If the Princess's favour lasts, it may be of use to her family. I have often been dubious if the seeming indifference of her highness's behaviour was owing to very good sense, or great insensibility; should it be the first, she will get the better of all her rivals, and probably one day have a large share of power.

I am very much pleased that you accustom yourself to tea, being persuaded that the moderate use of it is generally wholesome. I have planted a great deal in my garden, which is a fashion lately introduced in this country, and has succeeded very well. I cannot say it is as strong as the Indian, but it has the advantage of being fresher, and at least unmixed.

I thank you for the copies of Sir Charles Hanbury's poetry, which extremely entertained me. I find tar water has succeeded to Ward's drop: it is possible by this time that some other quackery has taken place of that; the English are easier than any other nation infatuated by the prospect of universal medicines; nor is there any country in the world where the doctors raise such immense fortunes. I attribute it to the fund of credulity which is in all mankind. We have no longer faith in miracles and reliques, and therefore, with the same fury, run after receipts and physicians: the same money which, three hundred years ago, was given for the health of the soul, is now given for the health of the body, and by the same sort of people, women and half-witted men: in the country where they have shrines and images, quacks are despised, and monks

and confessors find their account in managing the fear and hope which rule the actions of the multitude.

TO MR. WORTLEY.

Padua, September 16, 1748.

I AM informed that your health and sight are perfectly good, which gives me courage to trouble you with a letter of congratulation on a blessing that is equal to us both : I mean the great and good character I hear from every body of Lord Bute. It is a satisfaction I never hoped to have—a son that does honour to his family. I am persuaded you are of my opinion, and had rather be related, to him than to any silly duke in Christendom. Indeed, money (however considerable the sum) in the hands of a fool, is as useless as if presented to a monkey, and will as surely be scattered in the street. I need not quote examples. My daughter is also generally esteemed, and I cannot help communicating to you the pleasure I receive whenever I hear her commended. I am afraid my letter may be too long. This subject runs away with me. I wish you many years' continuance of the health and spirits I am told you now enjoy.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Venice, Oct. 1, N.S. 1748.

MY DEAR CHILD, — I have at length received the box, with the books enclosed, for which I give you many thanks, as they amused me very much. I gave a very ridiculous proof of it, fitter indeed for my grand-daughter than myself. I returned from a party on horseback; and after having rode twenty miles, part of it by moonshine, it was ten at night when I found the box arrived. I could not deny myself the pleasure of opening it; and falling upon Fielding's works, was fool enough to sit up all night reading. I think Joseph Andrews better than his Foundling. I believe I was the more struck with it, having at present a Fanny in my own house, not only by the name, which happens to be the same, but the extraordinary beauty, joined with an understanding yet more extraordinary at her age, which is but few months past sixteen: she is in the post of my chambermaid. I fancy you will tax my discretion for taking a servant thus qualified; but my woman, who is also my housekeeper, was always teazing me with her having too much work, and complaining of ill health, which determined me to take her a deputy; and when I was at Louvere, where I drank the waters, one of the most considerable merchants there pressed me to take this

daughter of his: her mother has an uncommon good character, and the girl has had a better education than is usual for those of her rank; she writes a good hand, and has been brought up to keep accounts, which she does to great perfection; and had herself such a violent desire to serve me, that I was persuaded to take her: I do not yet repent it from any part of her behaviour. But there has been no peace in the family ever since she came into it; I might say the parish, all the women in it having declared open war with her, and the men endeavouring all treaties of a different sort: my own woman puts herself at the head of the first party, and her spleen is increased by having no reason for it. The young creature is never stirring from my apartment, always at her needle, and never complaining of any thing. You will laugh at this tedious account of my domestics (if you have patience to read it over), but I have few other subjects to talk of.

I am much pleased at your account of your children: may they ever be as agreeable to you as they are at present. The waters have very much mended my health. I endeavour to preserve it by constant riding, and am a better horsewoman than ever I was in my life, having complied with the fashion of this country, which is every way so much better than ours. I cannot help being amazed at the obstinate folly by which the English ladies venture every day their lives and limbs.

My paper only allows me to add, I am your most affectionate mother.

TO MR. WORTLEY.

Venice, Dec. 25, N. S. 1748.

I HOPE I have now regulated our correspondence in a manner more safe than by Holland. I have sent a large collection of letters to you and my daughter, which have all miscarried; neither have I had one line from either for some months.

I was surprised not many days ago by a very extraordinary visit: it was from the Duchess of Guastalla, who you know is a Princess of the house d'Armstadt, and reported to be near marriage with the King of Sardinia. I confess it was an honour I could easily have spared, she coming attended with the greatest part of her court; her grand master, who is brother to Cardinal Valenti, the first lady of her bed-chamber, four pages, and a long et cetera of inferior servants, beside her guards. She entered with an easy French air, and told me, since I would not oblige her by coming to her court, she was resolved to come to me, and eat a salad of my raising, having

heard much fame of my gardening. You may imagine I gave her as a good a supper as I could. She was (or seemed to be) extremely pleased with an English sack-posset of my ordering. I owned to her fairly that my house was much at her service; but it was impossible for me to find beds for all her suite. She said she intended to return when the moon rose, which was an hour after midnight. In the mean time I sent for the violins to entertain her attendants, who were very well pleased to dance, while she and her grand master and I played at picquet. She pressed me extremely to return with her to her jointure-house, where she now resides (all the furniture of Guastalla being sold). I excused myself on not daring to venture in the cold night fifteen miles, but promised I would not fail to pay her my acknowledgments for the great honour her highness had done me, in a very short time, and we parted very good friends. She said she intended this spring to retire into her native country. I did not take the liberty of mentioning to her the report of her being in treaty with the King of Sardinia, though it has been in the newspaper of Mantua; but I found an opportunity of hinting it to Signor Gonzago, her grand-master, who told me the Duchess would not have been pleased to talk of it, since, perhaps, there was nothing in it more than a friendship that had long been between them, and since her widowhood the King sends her an express every day.

I believe you'll wish this long story much shorter; but I think you seemed to desire me to lengthen my letters, and I can have no greater pleasure than endeavouring to amuse you.

TO LADY BUTE.

Feb. 3, N. S. 1749.

My Dear Child, — I return you thanks for the news you send me. I am always amused with changes and chances that happen amongst my acquaintance. I pity the Duchess of Devonshire, and admire the greatness of mind that makes her refuse an addition to her own estate; but am surprised she can relinquish the care of her children, who are yet unsettled. Lady Thanet's behaviour has always been without any regard to public censure; but I am ever astonished (though I have frequently seen it) that women can so far renounce all decency, as to endeavour to expose a man whose name they bear. Lady Burlington has made a lucky choice for her daughter, I am well acquainted with Lord Hartington, (1) and I do not know any man so fitted

(1) Lord Hartington's marriage with Lady Charlotte Boyle took place in March 1748.

to make a wife happy: with so great a vocation for matrimony, that I verily believe, if it had not been established before his time, he would have had the glory of the invention.

I hear the carnival is very bright at Brescia. I have not yet been to partake of it, but I intend to go to the opera, which I hear much commended. Some ladies in the neighbourhood favoured me last week with a visit in masquerade. They were all dressed in white like vestal virgins, with garlands in their hands. They came at night with violins and flambeaux, but did not stay more than one dance; pursuing their way to another castle some miles from hence. I suppose you are now in London; wherever you are you have the good wishes of

Your most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

My compliments to Lord Bute and blessing to my grandchildren.

TO MR. WORTLEY.

Gotolengo, April 24, 1749.

C. Mutius Sext: F.
P. Papilius M. F.
Q. Mutius P. F.
M. Cornelius P. F.
IIII vir. Turrim Ex D D.
Ad augendam Locavêre
Idemque Probavêre.

THIS is a very fair inscription, in large characters, on a large stone found in the pavement of the old church, and makes now a part of the wall of the new one, which is now building. The people here, who are as ignorant as their oxen, and live like them on the product of their land, without any curiosity for the history of it, would infer from thence that this town is of Roman foundation, though the walls, which are yet the greatest part standing (only the towers and battlements demolished), are very plainly Gothic, and not one brick to be found any where of Roman fabric, which is very easily distinguished. I can easily believe their tradition, that the old church, which was pulled down two years ago, being ready to drop, was a pagan temple, and do not doubt it was a considerable town, founded by the Goths, when they overran Italy. The fortifications were strong for that age: the ditch still remaining within the walls being very broad and deep, in which ran the little river that is now before my house, and the moat turned into gardens for the use of the town, the name of which being Gotolengo, is a confirmation of my conjecture. The castle, which certainly stood on the spot where my house does, being

on an eminence in the midst of the town, was probably destroyed by fire. When I ordered the court to be levelled, which was grown uneven by long neglect, there was found such quantities of burnt bricks, that plainly showed the remains of a considerable fire; but whether by the enemy, or accidental, I could get no information. They have no records, or parish-books, beyond the time of their coming under the Venetian dominion, which is not much above three hundred years ago, at which time they were, as they now are, a large village, being two miles in circuit, and contains at present (as the curate told me) two thousand communicants. The ladies of this neighbourhood that had given themselves the trouble and expense of going to see Don Philip's entry into Parma, are returned, according to the French saying, *avec un pied de nez*. As they had none of them ever seen a court before, they had figured to themselves prodigious scenes of gallantry and magnificence.

If I did not write by the post, I would tell you several particulars, that I believe would make you laugh. He is retired into the country till the arrival of his princess, who is expected in May next. I take the liberty of inclosing this to Lord Bute, not knowing where to direct to him in London.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, August 22, 1749.

DEAR CHILD, — We are all very quiet here, all the *beau-monde* being hurried away to the fair at Bergamo, which is esteemed the best in Italy, after that of Senegallia. I was much pressed to go there by several parties; but would not fatigue myself with a journey of thirty miles. I am surprised at the account you give of London, yet can hardly suppose that there are not some rational creatures in it. The Duchess of Portland must be much altered if she is never out of a crowd; and by the character of Lady Middlesex, (1) who, I am told, is your most intimate companion, I should guess her to be another that would prefer an easy conversation to the noise of an assembly. I very well remember Caenwood House, (2) and cannot wish you in a more agreeable place. It would be a great pleasure to me to see my grand-children run about in the gardens. I do not ques-

(1) Miss Boyle, only daughter and heir of Richard Earl of Shannon, mistress of the robes to Augusta Princess of Wales, and wife of Charles Earl of Middlesex.

(2) Caenwood House was sold by Lord Bute in 1755 to the Earl of Mansfield; who rebuilt it from a design by Robert Adam.

tion Lord Bute's good taste in the improvements round it, or yours in choice of the furniture. I have heard the fame of paper-hangings, and had some thoughts of sending for a suite, but was informed that they were as dear as damask is here, which put an end to my curiosity.

I am solicitous to see Lord Bolingbroke's works. All the writings I have seen of his appeared to me to be copied from the French eloquence. I mean a poor or trite thought dressed in pompous language.

* * * * *

All weaknesses appear, as they increase, with age. I am afraid all humankind are born with the seeds of them, though they may be totally concealed, and consequently considerably lessened by education and philosophy. I have endeavoured to study and correct myself; and as courage was a favourite virtue, I studied to seem void of fear, and I believe was rather esteemed fool-hardy.

I am now grown timorous, and inclined to low spirits, whatever you may hear to the contrary. My cheerfulness is like the fire kindled in brushwood, which makes a show, but is soon turned to cold ashes. I do not, like Madam Maintenon, grieve about the decay which is allotted to all mortals, but would willingly excuse myself to you.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Salo, Oct. 17, 1749.

DEAR CHILD,—I received yours of August 25, this morning, October 17, N. S. It was every way welcome to me, particularly finding you and your family in good health. You will think me a great rambler, being at present far distant from the date of my last letter. I have been persuaded to go to a palace near Salo, situate on the vast lake of Gardia, and do not repent my pains since my arrival, though I have passed a very bad road to it. It is indeed, take it altogether, the first place I ever saw: the King of France has nothing so fine, nor can have in his situation. It is large enough to entertain all his court, and much larger than the royal palace of Naples, or any of those of Germany or England. It was built by the great Cosmo, Duke of Florence, where he passed many months, for several years, on the account of his health, the air being esteemed one of the best in Italy. All the offices and conveniences are suitably magnificent; but that is nothing in regard to the beauties without doors. It is seated in that part of the lake which forms an amphitheatre, at the foot of a mountain, near three miles high,

covered with a wood of orange, lemon, citron, and pomegranate trees, which is all cut into walks, and divided into terraces, that you may go into a several garden, from every floor in the house, diversified with fountains, cascades, and statues, and joined by easy marble staircases, which lead from one to another. There are many covered walks, where you are secure from the sun in the hottest part of the day, by the shade of the orange trees, which are so loaded with fruit, you can hardly have any notion of their beauty without seeing them: they are as large as lime trees in England. You will think I say a great deal: I will assure you I say far short of what I see, and you must turn to the fairy tales to give you any idea of the real charms of this enchanting palace, for so it may justly be called. The variety of the prospects, the natural beauties, and the improvements by art, where no cost has been spared to perfect it, render it the most complete habitation I know in Europe. While the poor present master of it (to whose ancestor the Grand Duke presented it, having built it on his land), having spent a noble estate by gaming and other extravagance, would be glad to let it for a trifle, and is not rich enough to live in it. Most of the fine furniture is sold; there remains only a few of the many good pictures that adorned it, and such goods as were not easily to be transported, or for which he found no chapman. I have said nothing to you of the magnificent bath, embellished with statues, or the fish-ponds, to the chief of which I go from my apartment on the first floor. It is circled by a marble balustrade, and supplied by water from a cascade that proceeds from the mouth of a whale, on which Neptune is mounted, surrounded with reeds: on each side of him are Tritons, which, from their shells, pour out streams that augment the pond. Higher on the hill are three collossal statues of Venus, Hercules, and Apollo. The water is so clear, you see the numerous fish that inhabit it, and it is a great pleasure to me to throw them bread, which they come to the surface to to eat with great greediness. I pass by many other fountains, not to make my description too tedious. You will wonder, perhaps, never to have heard any mention of this paradise either from our English travellers, or in any of the printed accounts of Italy: it is as much unknown to them as if it was guarded by a flaming cherubim. I attribute that ignorance, in part, to its being twenty miles distant from any post-town, and also to the custom of the English, of herding together, avoiding the conversation of the Italians, who, on their side, are naturally reserved, and do not seek strangers. Lady Orford could give

you some knowledge of it, having passed the last six months she staid here, in a house she hired at Salo; but as all her time was then taken up with the melancholy vapours her distresses had thrown into, I question whether her curiosity ever engaged her to see this palace, though but half a mile from it.

Oct. 25.

I was interrupted in this part of my letter by a visit from Count Martinenghi, master of this house, with his son and two daughters: they staid till this morning, being determined to show me all the fine places on this side the lake, to engage me to grow fond of staying here, and I have had a very pleasant progress in viewing the most remarkable palaces within ten miles round. Three from hence is the little town of Maderna, where the last Duke of Mantua built a retreat worthy a sovereign. It is now in the hands of a rich merchant, who maintains it in all its beauty. It is not half so large as that where I am, but perfectly proportioned and uniform, from a design of Palladio's. The garden is in the style of Le Notre, and the furniture in the been taste of Paris. I am almost ready to confess it deserves the preference to this, though built at far less expense. The situations are as different as is possible, when both of them are between a mountain and the lake: that under which the Duke of Mantua choose to build is much lower than this, and almost steril; the prospect of it is rather melancholy than agreeable; but the palace, being placed at the foot of it, is a mile distant from the lake, which forms a sort of peninsula, half a mile broad, and 'tis on that is the delightful garden, adorned with parterres, espaliers, all sort of exotic plants, and ends in a thick wood, cut into ridings; that in the midst is large enough for a coach, and terminates at the lake, which appears from the windows like a great canal made on purpose to beautify the prospect. On the contrary, the palace where I lodge is so near the water, that you step out of the gate into the barge, and the gardens being all divided, you cannot view from the house above one of them at a time. In short, these two palaces may in their different beauties rival each other, while they are neither of them to be excelled in any other part of the world.

I have wrote you a terrible long letter; but as you say you are often alone, it may serve you for half an hour's amusement; at least receive it as a proof that there is none more agreeable to me than giving assurances of my being, dear child, your most affectionate mother, M. W. M.

P. S. Yours of the 23rd September is just this minute brought

to me. I heartily wish you and my Lord Bute joy of his place; and wish it may have more advantageous consequences; but am glad you do not too much found hopes on things of so much uncertainty. I have read S. Fielding's works, and should be glad to hear what is become of her. All the other books would be new to me excepting Pamela, which has met with very extraordinary, and I (I think undeserved) success. It has been translated into French and into Italian; it was all the fashion at Paris and Versailles, and is still the joy of the chambermaids of all nations.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, Nov 1, 1749.

DEAR CHILD,—I received yours of August 25, and my Lord Bute's obliging notice of your safe delivery at the same time. I wish you joy of your young son, and of every thing else. You do not mention your father, by which I suppose he is not returned to England, and am in pain for his health, having heard but once from him since he left it, and know not whether he has received my letters. I dare say you need not be in any doubt of his good opinion of you; for my part, I am so far persuaded of the goodness of your heart, I have often had a mind to write you a consolatory epistle on my own death, which I believe will be some affliction, though my life is wholly useless to you. That part of it which we passed together you have reason to remember with gratitude, though I think you misplace it; you are no more obliged to me for bringing you into the world, than I am to you for coming into it, and I never made use of that common-place (and like most common-place, false) argument, as exacting any return of affection. There was a mutual necessity on us both to part at that time, and no obligation on either side. In the case of your infancy, there was so great a mixture of instinct, I can scarce even put that in the number of the proofs I have given you of my love; but I confess I think it a great one, if you compare my after conduct toward you with that of other mothers, who generally look on their children as devoted to their pleasures, and bound by duty to have no sentiments but what they please to give them; playthings at first, and afterwards the objects on which they may exercise their spleen, tyranny, or ill humour. I have always thought of you in a different manner. Your happiness was my first wish, and the pursuit of all my actions, divested of all self-interest so far. I think you ought, and believe you do, remember me as your real friend. Absence and distance

have not the power to lessen any part of my tenderness for you, which extends to all yours, and I am ever your most affectionate mother,

M. W. M.

I play at whist an hour or two every afternoon. The fashion here is to play for the collation, so that the losers have at least the consolation of eating part of their money.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, Nov, 29, 1749.

MY DEAR CHILD,—I received your agreeable letter of September 21, yesterday, November 29, and am very glad our daughter (for I think she belongs to us both) turns out so much to your satisfaction; may she ever do so. I hope she has by this time received my token. You please me extremely in saying my letters are of any entertainment to you. I would contribute to your happiness in every shape I can; but, in my solitude, there are so few subjects present themselves, it is not easy to find one that would amuse you, though, as I believe, you have some leisure hours at Caenwood, where anything is welcome. I will venture to tell you a small history in which I had some share. I have already informed you of the divisions and sub-divisions of estates in this country, by which you will imagine there is a numerous gentry of great names and little fortunes; six of those families inhabit this town. You may fancy this forms a sort of society; but far from it, as there is not one of them that does not think (for some reason or other) they are far superior to all the rest; there is such a settled aversion among them, they avoid one another with the utmost care, and hardly ever meet except by chance at the castle (as they call my house), where their regard for me obliges them to behave civilly, but it is with an affected coldness that is downright disagreeable, and hinders me from seeing any of them often.

I was quietly reading in my closet, when I was interrupted by the chambermaid of the Signora Laura Bono, who flung herself at my feet, and, in an agony of sobs and tears, begged me, for the love of the holy Madona, to hasten to her master's house, where the two brothers would certainly murder one another, if my presence did not stop their fury. I was very much surprised, having always heard them spoke of as a pattern of fraternal union. However, I made all possible speed thither, without staying for hoods or attendance, and was soon there, the house touching my garden-wall. I was directed to the bed-chamber by the noise of oaths and execrations; but,

on opening the door, was astonished to a degree you may better guess than I describe, by seeing the Signora Laura prostrate on the ground, melting in tears, and her husband standing with a drawn stiletto in his hand, swearing she should never see to-morrow's sun. I was soon let into the secret. The good man, having business of consequence at Brescia, went thither early in the morning; but, as he expected his chief tenant to pay his rent that day, he left orders with his wife, that if the farmer, who lived two miles off, came himself, or sent any of his sons, she should take care to make him very welcome. She obeyed him with great punctuality, the money coming in the hand of a handsome lad of eighteen: she did not only admit him to her own table, and produce the best wine in the cellar, but resolved to give him *chère entière*. While she was exercising this generous hospitality, the husband met midway the gentleman he intended to visit, who was posting to another side of the country; they agreed on another appointment, and he returned to his own house, where, giving his horse to be led round to the stable by the servant that accompanied him, he opened his door with the *passe-partout* key, and proceeded to his chamber, without meeting any body, where he found his beloved spouse asleep on the bed, with her gallant. The opening of the door waked them: the young fellow immediately leaped out of the window which looked into the garden, and was open, it being summer, and escaped over the fields, leaving his clothes on a chair by the bedside—a very striking circumstance. In short, the case was such, I do not think the queen of fairies herself could have found an excuse, though Chaucer tells us she has made a solemn promise to leave none of her sex unfurnished with one, to all eternity. As to the poor criminal, she had nothing to say for herself but what I dare swear you will hear from the youngest daughter, if ever you catch her stealing of sweetmeats—"pray, pray, she would do so no more, and indeed it was the first time." This last article found no credit with me: I cannot be persuaded that any woman who had lived virtuous till forty (for such is her age) could suddenly be endowed with such consummate impudence, to solicit a youth at first sight, there being no probability, his age and station considered, that he would have made any attempt of that kind. I must confess I was wicked enough to think the unblemished reputation she had hitherto maintained, and did not fail to put us in mind of, was owing to a series of such frolics; and to say truth, they are the only amours that can reasonably hope to remain undiscovered. Ladies that can resolve to make love thus *extempore*, may pass

unobserved, especially if they can content themselves with low life, where fear may oblige their favourites to secrecy: there wants only a very lewd constitution, a very bad heart, and a moderate understanding, to make this conduct easy; and I do not doubt it has been practised by many prudes beside her I am now speaking of. You may be sure I did not communicate these reflections. The first word I spoke was to desire Signor Carlo to sheath his poignard, not being pleased with its glittering: he did so very readily, begging my pardon for not having done it on my first appearance, saying he did not know what he did, and indeed he had the countenance and gesture of a man distracted. I did not endeavour a defence; that seemed to me impossible; but represented to him, as well as I could, the crime of a murder, which, if he could justify before men, was still a crying sin before God; the disgrace he would bring on himself and posterity, and the irreparable injury he would do his eldest daughter, a pretty girl of fifteen, that I knew he was extremely fond of. I added, that if he thought it proper to part from his lady, he might easily find a pretext for it some months hence; and that it was as much his interest as hers to conceal this affair from the knowledge of the world. I could not presently make him taste these reasons, and was forced to stay there near five hours (almost from five to ten at night) before I durst leave them together, which I would not do till he had sworn in the most serious manner he would make no future attempt on her life. I was content with his oath, knowing him to be very devout, and found I was not mistaken. How the matter was made up between them afterwards I know not; but it is now two years since it happened, and all appearances remaining as if it had never been. The secret is in very few hands; his brother being at that time at Brescia, I believe knows nothing of it to this day. The chambermaid and myself have preserved the strictest silence, and the lady retains the satisfaction of insulting all her acquaintance on the foundation of a spotless character, that only she can boast in the parish, where she is most heartily hated, from these airs of impertinent virtue, and another very essential reason, being the best dressed woman among them, though one of the plainest in her figure.

The discretion of the chambermaid in fetching me, which possibly saved her mistress's life, and her taciturnity since, I fancy appear very remarkable to you, and is what would certainly never happen in England. The first part of her behaviour deserves great praise; coming of her own accord, and inventing so decent an excuse for her admittance: but her

silence may be attributed to her knowing very well that any servant who presumes to talk of his master, will most certainly be incapable of talking at all in a short time, their lives being entirely in the power of their superiors: I do not mean by law, but by custom, which has full as much force. If one of them was killed, it would either never be inquired into at all, or very slightly passed over; yet it seldom happens: I know no instance of it, which I think is owing to the great submission of domestics, who are sensible of their dependence, and the national temper not being hasty, and never inflamed by wine, drunkenness being a vice abandoned to the vulgar, and spoke of with greater detestation than murder, which is mentioned with as little concern as a drinking bout in England, and is almost as frequent. It was extremely shocking to me at my first coming, and still gives me a sort of horror, though custom has in some degree familiarised it to my imagination. Robbery would be pursued with great vivacity, and punished with the utmost rigour, therefore is very rare, though stealing is in daily practice; but as all the peasants are suffered the use of fire-arms, the slightest provocation is sufficient to shoot, and they see one of their own species lie dead before them with as little remorse as a hare or a partridge, and, when revenge spurs them on, with much more pleasure. A dissertation on this subject would engage me in a discourse not proper for the post.

Your most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, Dec. 17, N. S. 1749.

DEAR CHILD,—I received yours of October 14 but yesterday: the negligence of the post is very disagreeable. I have at length had a letter from Lady Oxford, by which I find mine to her has miscarried, and perhaps the answer which I have now wrote may have the same fate.

I wish you joy of your young son: may he live to be a blessing to you. I find I amuse myself here in the same manner as if at London, according to your account of it; that is, I play at whist every night with some old priests that I have taught it to, and are my only companions. To say truth, the decay of my sight will no longer suffer me to read by candle light, and the evenings are now long and dark. I believe you'll be persuaded my gaming makes nobody uneasy, when I tell you that we play only a penny per corner. 'Tis now a year that I have lived wholly in the country, and have no design of quitting it. I am entirely given up to rural amusements,

and have forgot there are any such things as wits or fine ladies in the world. However, I am pleased to hear what happens to my acquaintance. I wish you would inform me what is become of the Pomfret family, and who Sir Francis Dashwood (1) has married. I knew him at Florence: he seemed so nice in the choice of a wife, I have some curiosity to know who it is that has had charms enough to make him enter into an engagement he used to speak of with fear and trembling.

I am ever, dear child, your most affectionate mother,

M. WORTLEY M.

TO MR. WORTLEY.

Louvere, Sept. 3, N. S. 1750.

I RECEIVED yesterday yours dated June 24. I am very well persuaded that the delay of all my letters, and the loss of many, is occasioned by the posts of Italy. I receive none but what are carelessly resealed, and some of them quite open. I am not surprised at it, considering the present circumstances, of which I would give you the detail, if it was safe to do it. I have now changed the method of conveyance, sending this to the English minister at Venice, who I have desired to put it in his packet. On the top of one of the highest hills with which this place is surrounded, here has been, two months since, accidentally discovered, a remarkable piece of antiquity; a stone vault; in which was the remains of a human body, a table, a spoon and a knife, and about an hundred pieces of coin, of a mixed metal, on none of which there is any legible inscription. Most of them, with the rest of the things I have mentioned, are in the possession of the parish priest. I am endeavouring to get them. If I do, and you have any curiosity to see them, I will send them to you. It is certain there is no fraud in this discovery; the people here having no notion of the value of any thing of this kind. I am of opinion it is a Gothic antiquity, there being no trace of any inscription having ever been upon the stone. Direct your next *recommandé au Chev. James Gray, Ministre de S. M. Britannique à Venise.*

TO MR. WORTLEY.

Brescia, Nov. 20, 1750.

I RECEIVED yours of October the 3d much sooner than I have done any others of late, although it had been opened. The

(1) He married Sarah, daughter and coheir of Thomas Gould, Esq., of Ivor, Bucks, and widow of Sir Richard Ellis, Bart.

great difference between the Venetian state, and that of the Church, has been slightly mentioned in the newspapers. It is not yet thoroughly accommodated, though much softened, since I wrote. I am very glad of Lord Bute's good fortune. I have wished my daughter joy in a long letter. I do not write so copiously to you, fearing it should be troublesome to your eyes. I sent some Italian poetry, which has been much admired here. I wonder you do not imitate, at London, the wise conduct of this state, who, when they found the rage of play untameable, invented a method to turn it to the advantage of the public—now fools lose their estates, and the government gains by it. The continuation of your health is my most fervent desire, and the news of it my greatest pleasure.

P. S. I have seen lately a history of the last years of Queen Anne, by Swift. I should be very glad to know your opinion of it. Some facts are apparently false, and I believe others partially represented.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, December 14, 1750.

DEAR CHILD,—I received yours of October the 28th this morning, December 24th, N. S. I am afraid a letter of two sheets of paper that I sent you from Salo never came to your hands, which I am very sorry for: it would have been, perhaps, some entertainment, being the description of places that I am sure you have not found in any book of travels. I also made my hearty congratulations to Lord Bute and yourself, on his place, which I hope is an earnest of future advantages. I desired you would send me all the books of which you gave a catalogue, except H. Fielding's and his sister's, which I have already. I thank God my taste still continues for the gay part of reading. (1) Wiser people may think it trifling, but it serves to sweeten life to me, and is at worst better than the generality of conversation. I am extremely pleased with the account you give me of your father's health: his life is the greatest blessing that can happen to his family. I am very sincerely touched with the Duchess of Montagu's misfortune, (2) though I think it no

(1) In Spencer's Anecdotes, by Singer, there is an observation of Lady Oxford in these words:—"I wonder how any body can find pleasure in reading the books which are that lady's chief favourites." Here we have Lady Mary's confession of her liking to works of imagination, and her defence of her taste.

(2) Lady Mary Churchill, youngest daughter of John Duke of Marlborough, wife of John Duke of Montagu, died May 4, 1751.

reasonable cause for locking herself up. Age and ugliness are as inseparable as heat and fire, and I think it all one in what shape one's figure grows disagreeable. I remember the Princess of Moldavia at Constantinople made a party of pleasure the next day after losing one of her eyes; and when I wondered at her philosophy, said, she had more reason to divert herself than she had before. 'Tis true our climate is apt to inspire more melancholy ideas: the enlivening heat of the sun continues the cheerfulness of youth to the grave with most people. I received a visit not long since from a fair young lady, that had new lain in of her nineteenth child: in reality she is but thirty-seven, and has so well preserved her fine shape and complexion, she appears little past twenty. I wish you the same good fortune, though not quite so numerous a posterity. Every happiness is ardently desired for you by, dear child, your most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY M.

P. S. My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessings to all your little ones. I am ashamed not to have sent my token to my goddaughter; I hope to do it in a short time.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, April 2, N. S. 1751.

MY DEAR CHILD,—I am very glad to hear of your health and recovery, being always uneasy till your danger is over. I wish you joy of your young son, and that you may have comfort in your numerous family.

I am not surprised to hear the Duke of Kingston remains unmarried: he is, I fear, surrounded with people, whose interest it is he should continue so. I desire to know the name of his present inclination: by the manner you speak of it, I suppose there is no occasion of the nicety of avoiding her name. I am sorry the Prince (1) has an episcopal education: he cannot have a worse both for himself and the nation; though the court of England is no more personally to me than the court of Pekin, yet I cannot help some concern for my native country, nor can I see any good purpose from church precepts, except they design him to take orders. I confess if I was King of Great Britain I would certainly be also Archbishop of Canterbury; but I believe that is a refinement of politics that will never enter into the heads of our managers, though there is no other way of having supreme power in church and state. I could say a great deal in favour of this idea; but as neither you nor I will

(1) Afterwards George III.

ever be consulted on the subject, I will not trouble you with my speculative notions.

I am very much pleased to hear of your father's good health. That every blessing may attend you is the earnest and sincere wish of, dear child, your most affectionate mother,

M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

April 15, N. S. 1751.

MY DEAR CHILD,— I received yours of Feb. 10th with great pleasure, as it brought me the news of your health, and that of your family. I cannot guess who you mean by Lord Montfort,(1) there being no such tittle when I left England, nor any Lord Hertford, (2) who I hear is named ambassador to France: these are all new people to me. I wish you would give me some information concerning them: none can be so agreeable as the continuation of your father's health; you see in him the good effect of a strict abstinence, and regular exercise. I am much pleased (but not at all surprised) at his kindness to you: I know him to be more capable of a generous action than any man I ever knew. I have never heard one word of the books that you told me were packed up last June. These things are very provoking, but fretting mends nothing. I will continue to write on, though the uncertainty of your receiving my letters is a strong abatement of my pleasure in writing, and will be of heavy consequence to my style. I feel at this minute the spirit of dulness chill my heart, and I am ready to break out into alacks and alases, with many murmurs against my cruel destiny, that will not even permit this distant conversation between us, without such allaying circumstances. However, I beg you not to be discouraged. I am persuaded, from the goodness of your heart, that you are willing to give me happiness; and I can have none here so great as a letter from you. You can never want subjects; and I can assure you that your eldest daughter cannot be more delighted with a birth-day suit, or your youngest with a paper of sugar-plumbs, than I am at the sight of your hand. You seem very anxious on the account of your children's education. I have said all I have to say on that head; and am still of the same opinion, that learning is necessary to the happiness of women, and ignorance the common foundation of their errors, both in morals and conduct.

(1) Henry Bromley, created Baron Montfort, 1741.
(2) Francis Seymour Conway, created Earl of Hertford, 1750.

I was well acquainted with a lady (the Duchess of M——r,(1) who, I am persuaded, owed all her misfortunes to the want of instruction in her youth. You know another, who, if she had had her natural good understanding cultivated by letters, would never have mistaken Johnny Gay for a wit, and much less have printed, that he took the liberty of calling her his Laura. (2)

I am pleasingly interrupted by the welcome information from Lord Bute that you are safely delivered of a son. I am never in pain for any of that sex. If they have any merit, there are so many roads for them to meet good fortune, they can no way fail but by not deserving it. We have but one of establishing ours, and that surrounded with precipices, and perhaps after all better missed than found. I have already told you I look on my grand-daughters as lay nuns. Lady Mary (3) might avoid that destiny, if religion was not a bar to her being disposed of in this country. You will laugh to hear it, but it is really true, I had proposed to me a young man of quality, with a good estate: his parents are both dead: she would find a fine palace, and neither want jewels nor equipage; and her name (with a present from me) be thought sufficient fortune.

I shall write to Lord Bute this post. My blessing to you and yours is sincerely sent from your most affectionate mother.

M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, June 19, N. S. 1751.

MY DEAR CHILD,— I am much obliged to Lord Bute for thinking of me so kindly: to say truth, I am as fond of baubles as ever, and am so far from being ashamed of it, that it is a taste I endeavour to keep up with all the art I am mistress of. I should have despised them at twenty for the same reason that I would not eat tarts or cheesecakes at twelve years old, as being too childish for one capable of more solid pleasures. I now know (and alas! have long known) all things in this world are almost equally trifling, and our most serious projects have scarce more foundation than those edifices that your little ones raise in cards. You see to what period the vast fortunes of the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, and Sir Robert Walpole are soon arrived. I believe as you do, that Lady Orford is a joyful widow, but am persuaded she has as much reason to weep for her husband as ever any woman has had, from Andro-

(1) Manchester. (2) The Duchess of Queensberry.
(3) Lady Mary Stuart, afterwards Countess of Lonsdale.

mache to this day. I never saw any second marriage that did not appear to me very ridiculous: hers is accompanied with circumstances that render the folly complete.

Sicknesses have been very fatal in this country, as well as England. I should be glad to know the names of those you say are deceased: I believe I am ignorant of half of them, the Dutch news being forbid here. I would not have you give yourself the trouble, but order one of your servants to transcribe the catalogue. You will perhaps laugh at this curiosity. If you ever return to Bute, you will find, that what happens in the world is a considerable amusement in solitude. The people I see here make no more impression on my mind than the figures in the tapestry, while they are directly before my eyes. I know one is clothed in blue, and another in red; but out of sight, they are so entirely out of memory, I hardly remember whether they are tall or short. I sometimes call myself to account for this insensibility, which has something of ingratitude in it, this little town thinking themselves highly honoured and obliged by my residence: they intended me an extraordinary mark of it, having determined to set up my statue in the most conspicuous place: the marble was bespoke, and the sculptor bargained with, before I knew any thing of the matter; and it would have been erected without my knowledge, if it had not been necessary for him to see me to take the resemblance. I thanked them very much for the intention; but utterly refused complying with it, fearing it would be reported (at least in England) that I had set up my own statue. They were so obstinate in the design, I was forced to tell them my religion would not permit it. I seriously believe it would have been worshipped, when I was forgotten, under the name of some saint or other, since I was to have been represented with a book in my hand, which would have passed for a proof of canonization. This compliment was certainly founded on reasons not unlike those that first famed goddesses, I mean being useful to them, in which I am second to Ceres. If it be true she taught the art of sowing wheat, it is certain I have learned them to make bread, in which they continued in the same ignorance Misson complains of (as you may see in his letter from Padnor). I have introduced French rolls, custards, minced pies, and plumb-pudding, which they are very fond of. 'Tis impossible to bring them to conform to sillabub, which is so unnatural a mixture in their eyes, they are even shocked to see me eat it: but I expect immortality from the science of butter making, in which they are become so skilful from my instructions. I can assure you here is as good as in any part of Great Britain. I

am afraid I have bragged of this before; but when you do not answer any part of my letters, I suppose them lost, which exposes you to some repetitions. Have you received that I wrote on my first notice of the Prince's death? I shall receive Lord Bute's china with great pleasure. The pearl necklace for my god-daughter has been long packed up for her, I wish I could say, sent. In the mean time give her, and the rest of yours, my blessing; with thanks and compliments to Lord Bute, from your most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY M.

P.S. I desire you would order the china to be packed up by some skilful man of the trade, or I shall receive it in pieces.

TO MR. WORTLEY.

Louvere, June 20, N. S. 1751.

I RECEIVED yours of May the 9th yesterday, with great satisfaction, findind in it an amendment of your health. I am not surprised at Lady Orford's (1) folly, having known her at Florence: she made great court to me. She has parts, and a very engaging manner. Her company would have amused me very much, but I durst not indulge myself in it, her character being in universal horror. I do not mean from her gallantries, which nobody trouble their heads with, but she had a collection of free-thinkers that met weekly at her house to the scandal of all good Christians. She invited me to one of these honourable assemblies, which I civilly refused, not desiring to be thought of her opinion, nor thinking it right to make a jest of ordinances that are (at least) so far sacred, as they are absolutely necessary in all civilized governments; and it is being in every sense an enemy to mankind, to endeavour to overthrow them. Tar water is arrived in Italy. I have been asked several questions concerning the use of it in England. I do not find it makes any great progress here; the doctors confine it to a possibility of being useful in the cure of inward ulcers, and allow it no farther merit. I told you, some time ago, the method in this country of making it the interest of the physicians to keep the town in good health. I wish that, and the Roman law concerning last testaments, were imported for the good of England: I know no foreign fashion or quackery that would be so useful among us. I have wrote a long letter

(1) Margaret, daughter and heir of Samuel Rolle, Esq., of Haynton, co. Devon, and relict of Robert, second Earl of Orford, who died in 1751, married the Honourable Sewallis Shirley in the same year. She resided principally at Florence.

to my daughter this post; I cannot help fearing for her. Time and distance have increased, and not diminished, my tenderness for her. I own it is stronger than my philosophy: my reason agrees with Atticus, but my passions are the same with Tully's.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, July 23, 1751.

DEAR CHILD,—I received yesterday, July 22, N. S. yours of June 2nd. I own I could not help regretting the Duchess of Montagu (with whom I have passed many agreeable hours), though I think I am in the wrong in so doing, being persuaded her life was grown burthensome to her, and I believe she would not own herself in danger to avoid the remedies that would have been pressed upon her. I am not surprised at Lady Orford's marriage: her money was, doubtless, convenient to Mr. Shirley, and I dare swear she piques herself on not being able to refuse him any thing. It has been her way with all her lovers: he is the most creditable of any she ever had: his birth and sense will induce him to behave to her with decency, and it is what she has not been much used to. As it is a true saying, "*Cowards more blows than any hero bear*;" it is as certainly true, ladies of pleasure (very improperly so called) suffer more mortifications than any nun of the most austere order that ever was instituted. Lady Orford is a shining instance of that truth; the most submissive wife to the most tyrannic husband that ever was born, is not such a slave as I saw her at Florence. I have hardly ever seen engagements of that sort on another footing. Contempt is joined with intimacy in those cases, and there are few men that do not indulge the malignity that is in human nature, when they can do it (as they fancy) justifiably.

I have had a return, though in a less degree, of the distemper I had last year, and am afraid I must go again to the waters of Louvere. The journey is so disagreeable I would willingly avoid it; and I have little taste for the diversions of the place.

August 1.

Thus far of my letter was wrote at Gotolengo, and it is concluded at Louvere, where the doctors have dragged me. I find much more company than ever. I have done by these waters as I formerly did by those at Islington: you may remember when I first carried you there, we scarce saw any but ourselves, and in a short time we could hardly find room for the crowd. I arrived but last night, so can say nothing of my

success in relation to my health. I must end my letter in a hurry: here is company; and I can only say I am ever your most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, Nov. 2, 1751.

MY DEAR CHILD,—I am always pleased when I hear you have been with the Duke and Duchess of Portland, being persuaded they are both worthy and sincere friends of yours. I had wrote so many letters to dear Lady Oxford without receiving any answer, that I was in great pain on her account. I will write again, though I lose so much of my writing: I am afraid it will only be more time and paper thrown away. I pity poor Lady D——, (1) who, perhaps, thinks herself at present an object of envy: she will be soon undeceived: no rich widow can marry on prudential motives; and where passion is only on one side, every marriage must be miserable. If she thought justly, she would know that no man ever was in love with a woman of forty, since the deluge: a boy may be so; but that blaze of straw only lasts till he is old enough to distinguish between youth and age, which generally happens about seventeen: till that time the whole sex appears angelic to a warm constitution; but as that is not Mr. T——'s (2) case, all she can hope is a cold complaisance, founded on gratitude, which is the most uncertain of all foundations for a lasting union. I know not how it is, whether obligers are apt to exact too large returns, or whether human pride naturally hates to remember obligation, but I have seldom seen friendships continue long, where there has been great benefits conferred; and I should think it the severest suffering to know I was a burden on the good nature of a man I loved, even if I met a mind so generous as to dissemble a disgust which he could not help feeling. Lady D —— (2) had fond parents, and, as I have heard, an obliging husband. Her sorrowful hours are now coming on; they will be new to her, and 't is a cruel addition to reflect (as

(1) Lady Dalkeith, eldest daughter of John Duke of Argyle, widow of Francis Earl of Dalkeith, and mother by him of Henry Duke of Buccleuch; married secondly the famous Charles Townshend, She was created Baroness Greenwich, with remainder to Charles and William Townshend, their sons; but both died unmarried in her lifetime, and the title became extinct.

This letter is probably misdated; Lord Dalkeith died only in 1750, and the marriage of Lady Dalkeith did not take place till 1755.

(2) Towns hend. (3) Dalkeith.

she must do) that they have been her own purchasing. I wish my favourite Lady Mary Coke may make use of her bitter experience to escape the snares laid for her: they are so various and so numerous, if she can avoid them, I shall think she has some supernatural assistance, and her force more wonderful than any of Don Quixote there, though they vanquished whole armies by the strength of a single lance.

I have sent Lady Jane (1) a little ring: if it comes safe, I will find something for Lady Anne: (2) I expect a letter of thanks. I think I have ill luck if none of my grand-daughters have a turn for writing: she that has, will be distinguished by me. I have sent you three bills of exchange: it does not appear you have received one; what method to take I cannot imagine: I must depend on my new friend, who is a merchant of the Valteline. If the war breaks out, difficulties will increase; though our correspondence can hardly be more interrupted than it is already. I must endure it as set down by destiny in the long list of mortifications allotted to, dear child,

Your most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

TO MR. WORTLEY.

Louvere, Nov. 10, N. S. 1751.

I RECEIVED yours of October 10 this day, which is much quicker than any I ever had from England. I will not make any reflections on the conduct of the person you mention; (1) 'tis a subject too melancholy to us both. I am of opinion tallying at Bassette is a certain revenue (even without cheating) to those that can get constant punters, and are able to submit to the drudgery of it; but I never knew any one pursue it long, and preserve a tolerable reputation. The news of the recovery of your health makes me amends for the displeasure of hearing his ill figure.

I have often read and been told that the air of Hungary is better, and the inhabitants in general longer lived, than in any other part of Europe. You have given me a very surprising instance of it, far surpassing in age the old woman of Louvere, though, in some circumstances, I think her story as extraordinary. She died but ten years ago; and it is well remembered by the inhabitants of that place, the most creditable of whom have all assured me of the truth of the facts:—She kept

(1) Lady Jane Stuart, afterwards married to Sir George Macartney.
(2) Lady Anne Stuart, afterwards married to Lord Percy.
(3) This evidently alludes to her son.

the greatest inn there till past fifty: her husband then dying, and she being rich, she left off that trade; and having a large house, with a great deal of furniture, she let lodgings, which her daughters (two maids past seventy) still continue. I lodged with them the first year of my going to those waters. She lived to one hundred years, with good health; but in the last five years of it, fell into the decays common to that period—dimness of sight, loss of teeth, and baldness; but in her hundredth year her sight was totally restored, she had a new set of teeth, and a fresh head of brown hair. I mentioned it to several ladies, who none of them had heard it, but the rest was confirmed to me by every body. She lived in this renewed vigour ten years, and then had her picture drawn, which has a vivacity in the eyes and complexion that would become five-and-twenty, though, by the falls in the face, one may discern it was drawn for a very old person. She died merely of an accident, which would have killed any other—tumbling down a very bad stone-staircase, which goes into the cellar, she broke her head in such a manner, she lived but two days. The physician and surgeon who attended her told me that her age no way contributed to her death. I inquired whether there was any singularity in her diet, but heard of none, excepting that her breakfast was every morning a large quantity of bread sopped in cold water. The common food of the peasants in this country is the Turkish wheat you mention, which they dress in various manners, but use little milk, it being chiefly reserved for cheese, or the tables of the gentry. I have not observed either among the poor or rich, that in general they live longer than in England. This woman of Louvere is always spoken of as a prodigy; and I am surprised she is neither called saint nor witch, being very prodigal of those titles.

I return you many thanks for the length of your entertaining letter; but am very sorry it was troublesome to you to write it. I wish the reading of this may not be so. I will seek for a picture for Lord Bute.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, Dec. 8, N. S. 1751.

This town is at present in a general stare, or, to use their own expression, *sotto sopra;* and not only this town, but the capital, Bergamo, the whole province, the neighbouring Brescian, and perhaps all the Venetian dominion, occasioned by an adventure exactly resembling, and I believe copied from, Pamela. I know not under what constellation that foolish

stuff was wrote, but it has been translated into more languages than any modern performance I ever heard of. No proof of its influence was ever stronger than this present story, which, in Richardson's hands, would serve very well to furnish out seven or eight volumes. I shall make it as short as I can.

Here is a gentleman's family, consisting of an old batchelor and his sister, who have fortune enough to live with great elegance, though without any magnificence, possessed of the esteem of all their acquaintance, he being distinguished by his probity, and she by her virtue. They are not only suffered but sought after by all the best company, and indeed are the most conversable and reasonable people in this place. She is an excellent housewife, and particularly remarkable for keeping her pretty house as neat as any in Holland. She appears no longer in public, being past fifty, and passes her time chiefly at home with her work, receiving few visitants. This Signora Diana, about ten years since, saw, at a monastery, a girl of eight years old, who came thither to beg alms for her mother. Her beauty, though covered with rags, was very observable, and gave great compassion to the charitable lady, who thought it meritorious to rescue such a modest sweetness as appeared in her face from the ruin to which her wretched circumstances exposed her. She asked some questions, to which she answered with a natural civility that seemed surprising; and finding the head of her family (her brother) to be a cobbler, who could hardly live by that trade, she bid the child follow her home; and sending for her parent, proposed to her to breed the little Octavia for her servant. This was joyfully accepted, the old woman dismissed with a piece of money, and the girl remained with the Signora Diana, who bought her decent clothes, and took pleasure in teaching her whatever she was capable of learning. She learned to read, write, and cast accounts, with uncommon facility; and had such a genius for work, that she excelled her mistress in embroidery, point, and every operation of the needle. She grew perfectly skilled in confectionary, had a good insight into cookery, and was a great proficient in distillery. To these accomplishments she was so handy, well-bred, humble, and modest, that not only her master and mistress, but every body that frequented the house took notice of her. She lived thus near nine years, never going out but to church. However, beauty is as difficult to conceal as light; hers begun to make a great noise. Signora Diana told me she observed an unusual concourse of pedling women that came on pretext to sell pennyworths of lace, china, etc., and several young gentlemen, very well powdered,

that were perpetually walking before her door, and looking up at the windows. These prognostics alarmed her prudence, and she listened very willingly to some honourable proposals that were made by many honest thriving tradesmen. She communicated this to Octavia, and told her, that though she was sorry to lose so good a servant, yet she thought it right to advise her to choose a husband. The girl answered modestly, that it was her duty to obey all her commands, but she found no inclination to marriage; and if she would permit her to live single, she should think it a greater obligation than any other she could bestow. Signora Diana was too conscientious to force her into a state from which she could not free her, and left her to her own disposal. However, they parted soon after: whether (as the neighbours say) Signor Aurelio Ardinghi, her brother, looked with too much attention on the young woman, or that she herself (as Diana says) desired to seek a place of more profit, she removed to Bergamo, where she soon found preferment, being strongly recommended by the Ardinghi family. She was advanced to be first waiting-woman to an old countess, who was so well pleased with her service, she desired, on her death bed, Count Jeronimo Losi, her son, to be kind to her. He found no repugnance to this act of obedience, having distinguished the beautiful Octavia, from his first sight of her; and during the six months that she had served in the house, had tried every art of a fine gentleman, accustomed to victories of that sort, to vanquish the virtue of this fair virgin. He has a handsome figure, and has had an education uncommon in this country, having made the tour of Europe, and brought from Paris all the improvements that are to be picked up there, being celebrated for his grace in dancing, and skill in fencing and riding, by which he is a favourite among the ladies, and respected by the men. Thus qualified for conquest, you may judge of his surprise at the firm yet modest resistance of this country girl, who was neither to be moved by address, nor gained by liberality, nor on any terms would be prevailed on to stay as his housekeeper, after the death of his mother. She took that post in the house of an old judge, where she continued to be solicited by the emissaries of the Count's passion, and found a new persecutor in her master, who, after three months' endeavour to corrupt her, offered her marriage. She chose to return to her former obscurity, and escaped from his pursuit, without asking any wages, and privately returned to the Signora Diana. She threw herself at her feet, and, kissing her hands, begged her with tears to conceal her, at least some time, if she would not

accept her service. She protested she had never been happy since she left it. While she was making these submissions, Signor Aurelio entered. She intreated his intercession on her knees, who was easily persuaded to consent she should stay with them, though his sister blamed her highly for her precipitate flight, having no reason, from the age and character of her master, to fear any violence, and wondered at her declining the honour he offered her. Octavia confessed that perhaps she had been too rash in her proceedings, but said, that he seemed to resent her refusal in such a manner as frightened her; she hoped that after a few days' search he would think no more of her; and that she scrupled entering into the holy bands of matrimony, where her heart did not sincerely accompany all the words of the ceremony. Signora Diana had nothing to say in contradiction to this pious sentiment; and her brother applauded the honesty which could not be perverted by any interest whatever. She remained concealed in their house, where she helped in the kitchen, cleaned the rooms, and redoubled her usual diligence and officiousness. Her old master came to Louvere on pretence of adjusting a law-suit, three days after, and made private inquiry after her; but hearing from her mother and brother (who knew nothing of her being here) that they had never heard of her, he concluded she had taken another route, and returned to Bergamo; and she continued in this retirement near a fortnight.

Last Sunday, as soon as the day was closed, arrived at Signor Aurelio's door, a handsome equipage in a large coach, attended by four well armed servants on horseback. An old priest stepped out of it, and desiring to speak with Signora Diana, informed her he came from the Count Jeronimo Losi, to demand Octavia; that the Count waited for her at a village four miles from hence, where he intended to marry her; and had sent him, who was engaged to perform the divine rite, that Signora Diana might resign her to his care without any difficulty. The young damsel was called for, who intreated she might be permitted the company of another priest with whom she was acquainted: this was readily granted; and she sent for a young man that visits me very often, being remarkable for his sobriety and learning. Meanwhile a valet de chambre presented her with a box, in which was a complete genteel undress for a lady. Her laced linen and fine night gown were soon put on, and away they marched, leaving the family in a surprise not to be described.

Signor Aurelio came to drink coffee with me next morning: his first words were, he had brought me the history of Pamela.

I said, laughing, I had been tired with it long since. He explained himself by relating this story, mixed with great resentment for Octavia's conduct. Count Jeronimo's father had been his ancient friend and patron; and this escape from his house (he said) would lay him under a suspicion of having abetted the young man's folly, and perhaps expose him to the anger of all his relations, for contriving an action he would rather have died than suffered, if he had known how to prevent it. I easily believed him, there appearing a latent jealousy under his affliction, that showed me he envied the bridegroom's happiness, at the same time he condemned his extravagance.

Yesterday noon, being Saturday, Don Joseph returned, who has got the name of Parson Williams by this expedition: he relates, that when the bark which carried the coach and train arrived, they found the amorous Count waiting for his bride on the bank of the lake: he would have proceeded immediately to the church; but she utterly refused it, till they had each of them been at confession; after which the happy knot was tied by the parish priest. They continued their journey, and came to their palace at Bergamo in a few hours, where every thing was prepared for their reception. They received the communion next morning, and the Count declares that the lovely Octavia has brought him an inestimable portion, since he owes to her the salvation of his soul. He has renounced play, at which he had lost a great deal of time and money. She has already retrenched several superfluous servants, and put his family into an exact method of economy, preserving all the splendor necessary to his rank. He has sent a letter in his own hand to her mother, inviting her to reside with them, and subscribing himself her dutiful son: but the Countess has sent another privately by Don Joseph, in which she advises the old woman to stay at Louvere, promising to take care she shall want nothing, accompanied with a token of twenty sequins, (1) which is at least nineteen more than ever she saw in her life.

I forgot to tell you that from Octavia's first serving the old lady, there came frequent charities in her name to her poor parent, which nobody was surprised at, the lady being celebrated for pious works, and Octavia known to be a great favourite with her. It is now discovered that they were all sent by the generous lover, who has presented Don Joseph very handsomely, but he has brought neither letter nor message to the house of Ardinghi, which affords much speculation.

I am afraid you are heartily tired with this tedious tale. I

(1) About ten guineas English.

will not lengthen it with reflections, as I fancy yours will be the same as mine.

With mine all these adventures proceed from artifice on one side and weakness on the other. An honest, tender mind is often betrayed to ruin by the charms that make the fortune of a designing head, which, when joined with a beautiful face, can never fail of advancement, except barred by a wise mother, who locks up her daughters from view till nobody cares to look on them. My poor friend the Duchess of Bolton (1) was educated in solitude, with some choice of books, by a Saint-like governess: crammed with virtue and good qualities, she thought it impossible not to find gratitude, though she failed to give passion; and upon this plan threw away her estate, was despised by her husband, and laughed at by the public. Polly, bred in an alehouse, and produced on the stage, has obtained wealth and title, and found the way to be esteemed. So useful is early experience—without it half of life is dissipated in correcting the errors that we have been taught to receive as indisputable truths.

I am ever your truly affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, Jan. 21, 1752.

MY DEAR CHILD,— I am extremely concerned to hear you complain of ill health, at a time of life when you ought to be in the flower of your strength. I hope I need not recommend to you the care of it: the tenderness you have for your children is sufficient to enforce you to the utmost regard for the preservation of a life so necessary to their well being. I do not doubt your prudence in their education; neither can I say anything particular relating to it at this distance, different tempers requiring different management. In general, never attempt to govern them (as most people do) by deceit: if they find themselves cheated, even in trifles, it will so far lessen the authority of their instructor, as to make them neglect all their future admonitions; and, if possible, breed them free from prejudices; those contracted in the nursery often influence the whole life after, of which I have seen many melancholy examples. I shall say no more of this subject, nor would have said this little if

(1) Lady Anne Vaughan, daughter and heir of John Earl of Carberry, married Charles Duke of Bolton in 1713, and died in 1751. The Duke of Bolton afterwards married Lavinia Fenton, the celebrated *Polly* in Gay's *Beggar's Opera*.

you had not asked my advice: 't is much easier to give rules than to practise them. I am sensible my own natural temper is too indulgent: I think it the least dangerous error, yet still it is an error. I can only say with truth, that I do not know in my whole life having ever endeavoured to impose on you, or give a false colour to any thing that I represented to you. If your daughters are inclined to love reading, do not check their inclination by hindering them of the diverting part of it; it is as necessary for the amusement of women as the reputation of men; but teach them not to expect or desire any applause from it. Let their brothers shine, and let them content themselves with making their lives easier by it, which I experimentally know is more effectually done by study than any other way. Ignorance is as much the fountain of vice as idleness, and indeed generally produces it. People that do not read or work for a livelihood have many hours they know not how to employ, especially women, who commouly fall into vapours, or something worse. I am afraid you'll think this letter very tedious: forgive it as coming from your most affectionate mother. M. W.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

1752.

DEAR CHILD,— I received yesterday, Feb. 15, N. S. the case of books you were so good to send to me: the entertainment they have already given me has recompensed me for the long time I expected them. I began, by your direction, with Peregrine Pickle. I think Lady Vane's memoirs contain more truth and less malice than any I ever read in my life. When she speaks of her own being disinterested, I am apt to believe she really thinks so herself, as many highwaymen, after having no possibility of retrieving the character of honesty, please themselves with that of being generous, because whatever they get on the road, they always spend at the next alehouse, and are still as beggarly as ever. Her history, rightly considered, would be more instructive to young women than any sermon I know. They may see there what mortifications and variety of misery are the unavoidable consequences of gallantry. I think there is no rational creature that would not prefer the life of the strictest Carmelite to the round of hurry and misfortune she has gone through. Her style is clear and concise, with some strokes of humour, which appear to me so much above her, I can't help being of opinion the whole has been modelled by the author of the book in which it is inserted, who is some subaltern admirer of hers. I may judge wrong, she being no

acquaintance of mine, though she has married two of my relations. Her first wedding was attended with circumstances that made me think a visit not at all necessary, though I disobliged Lady Susan by neglecting it; and her second, which happened soon after, made her so near a neighbour, that I rather chose to stay the whole summer in town than partake of her balls and parties of pleasure, to which I did not think it proper to introduce you; and had no other way of avoiding it, without incurring the censure of a most unnatural mother for denying you diversions, that the pious Lady Ferrers permitted to her exemplary daughters. Mr. Shirley has had uncommon fortune in making the conquest of two such extraordinary ladies, equal in their heroic contempt of shame, and eminent above their sex, the one for beauty, and the other wealth, both which attract the pursuit of all mankind, and have been thrown into his arms with the same unlimited fondness. He appeared to me gentle, well bred, well shaped, and sensible; but the charms of his face and eyes, which Lady Vane describes with so much warmth, were, I confess, always invisible to me, and the artificial part of his character very glaring, which I think her story shows in a strong light.

The next book I laid my hand on was the Parish Girl, which interested me enough not to be able to quit it till it was read over, though the author has fallen into the common mistake of romance-writers; intending a virtuous character, and not knowing how to draw it; the first step of his heroine (leaving her patroness's house) being altogether absurd and ridiculous, justly entitling her to all the misfortunes she met with. Candles came, (and my eyes grown weary,) I took up the next book, merely because I supposed from the title it could not engage me long. It was Pompey the Little, which has really diverted me more than any of the others, and it was impossible to go to bed till it was finished. It is a real and exact representation of life, as it is now acted in London, as it was in my time, and as it will be (I do not doubt) a hundred years hence, with some little variation of dress, and perhaps of government. I found there many of my acquaintance. Lady T. and Lady O. are so well painted, I fancied I heard them talk, and have heard them say the very things there repeated. I also saw myself (as I now am) in the character of Mrs. Qualmsick. You will be surprised at this, no English woman being so free from vapours, having never in my life complained of low spirits, or weak nerves; but our resemblance is very strong in the fancied loss of appetite, which I have been silly enough to be persuaded into by the physician of this place. He visits me frequently, as being one of

the most considerable men in the parish, and is a grave, sober, thinking, great fool, whose solemn appearance, and deliberate way of delivering his sentiments, gives them an air of good sense, though they are often the most injudicious that ever were pronounced. By perpetual telling me I eat so little, he is amazed I am able to subsist. He had brought me to be of his opinion; and I began to be seriously uneasy at it. This useful treatise has roused me into a recollection of what I eat yesterday, and do almost every day the same. I wake generally about seven, and drink half a pint of warm asses' milk, after which I sleep two hours; as soon as I am risen, I constantly take three cups of milk coffee, and two hours after that a large cup of milk chocolate: two hours more brings my dinner, where I never fail swallowing a good dish (I don't mean plate) of gravy soup, with all the bread, roots, etc., belonging to it. I then eat a wing and the whole body of a large fat capon, and a veal sweetbread, concluding with a competent quantity of custard, and some roasted chestnuts. At five in the afternoon I take another dose of asses' milk; and for supper twelve chestnuts (which would weigh two of those in London), one new laid egg, and a handsome porringer of white bread and milk. With this diet, notwithstanding the menaces of my wise doctor, I am now convinced I am in no danger of starving; and am obliged to little Pompey for this discovery.

I opened my eyes this morning on Leonora, from which I defy the greatest chymist in morals to extract any instruction. The style is most affectedly florid and naturally insipid, with such a confused heap of admirable characters, that never are, or can be, in human nature. I flung it aside after fifty pages, and laid hold of Mrs. Philips, where I expected to find, at least probable if not true facts, and was not disappointed. There is a great similitude in the genius and adventures (the one being productive of the other), between Madam Constantia and lady Vane: the first mentioned has the advantage in birth, and, if I am not mistaken, in understanding: they have both had scandalous law-suits with their husbands, and are endowed with the same intrepid assurance. Constantia seems to value herself also on her generosity, and has given the same proofs of it. The parallel might be drawn out to be as long as any of Plutarch's; but I dare swear you are already heartily weary of my remarks, and wish I had not read so much in so short a time, that you might not be troubled with my comments; but you must suffer me to say something of the polite Mr. S—, whose name I should never have guessed by the rapturous description his mistress makes of his person, having always looked upon him as one of the most disagreeable fellows

about town, as odious in his outside as stupid in his conversation, and I should as soon have expected to hear of his conquests at the head of an army as among women; yet he has been, it seems, the darling favourite of the most experienced of the sex, which shows me I am a very bad judge of merit. But I agree with Mrs. Philips, that however profligate she may have been, she is infinitely his superior in virtue; and if her penitence is as sincere as she says, she may expect their future fate to be like that of Dives and Lazarus.

This letter is of a most immoderate length. It will find you at Caenwood; your solitude there will permit you to peruse, and even to forgive, all the impertinence of your most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere. June 23, N. S. 1752.

SOON after I wrote my last letter to my dear child, I was seized with so violent a fever, accompanied with so many bad symptoms, my life was despaired of by the physician of Gottolengo, and I prepared myself for death with as much resignation as that circumstance admits: some of my neighbours, without my knowledge, sent express for the doctor of this place, whom I have mentioned to you formerly as having uncommon secrets. I was surprised to see him at my bedside. He declared me in great danger, but did not doubt my recovery, if I was wholly under his care; and his first prescription was transporting me hither: the other physician asserted positively I should die on the road. It has always been my opinion that it is a matter of the utmost indifference where we expire, and I consented to be removed. My bed was placed on a brancard; my servants followed in chaises; and in this equipage I set out. I bore the first day's journey of fifteen miles without any visible alteration. The doctor said as I was not worse I was certainly better; and the next day proceeded twenty miles to Isco, which is at the head of this lake. I lay each night at noblemen's houses, which were empty. My cook, with my physician, always preceded two or three hours, and I found my chamber and all necessaries ready prepared with the exactest attention. I was put into a bark in my litter bed, and in three hours arrived here. My spirits were not at all wasted (I think rather raised) by the fatigue of my journey. I drank the water next morning, and, with a few doses of my physician's prescription, in three days found myself in perfect health, which appeared almost a miracle to all that saw me. You may imagine I am willing to submit to the orders of one

that I must acknowledge the instrument of saving my life, though they are not entirely conformable to my will and pleasure. He has sentenced me to a long continuance here, which, he says, is absolutely necessary to the confirmation of my health, and would persuade me that my illness has been wholly owing to my omission of drinking the waters these two years past. I dare not contradict him, and must own he deserves (from the various surprising cures I have seen) the name given him in this country, of the "miraculous man." Both his character and practice are so singular, I cannot forbear giving you some account of them. He will not permit his patients to have either surgeon or apothecary: he performs all the operations of the first with great dexterity, and whatever compounds he gives, he makes in his own house; those are very few: the juice of herbs, and these waters, being commonly his sole prescriptions. He has very little learning, and professes drawing all his knowledge from experience, which he possesses, perhaps, in a greater degree than any other mortal, being the seventh doctor of his family, in a direct line. His forefathers have all of them left journals and registers solely for the use of their posterity, none of them having published any thing; and he has recourse to these manuscripts on every difficult case, the veracity of which, at least, is unquestionable. His vivacity is prodigious, and he is indefatigable in his industry; but what most distinguishes him is a disinterestedness I never saw in any other: he is as regular in his attendance on the poorest peasant, from whom he never can receive one farthing, as on the richest of the nobility; and whenever he is wanted, will climb three or four miles on the mountains, in the hottest sun, or heaviest rain, where a horse cannot go, to arrive at a cottage, where, if their condition requires it, he does not only give them advice and medicines gratis, but bread, wine, and whatever is needful. There never passes a week without one or more of these expeditions. His last visit is generally to me. I often see him as dirty and tired as a foot post, having eat nothing all day but a roll or two that he carries in his pocket, yet blest with such a perpetual flow of spirits, he is always gay to a degree above cheerfulness. There is a peculiarity in this character that I hope will incline you to forgive my drawing it.

I have already described to you this extraordinary spot of land, which is almost unknown to the rest of the world, and indeed does not seem to be destined by nature to be inhabited by human creatures, and I believe would never have been so, without the cruel civil war between the Guelps and Gibellines. Before that time here were only the huts of a few fishermen,

who came at certain seasons on account of the fine fish with which this lake abounds, particularly trouts, as large and red as salmon. The lake itself is different from any other I ever saw or read of, being the colour of the sea, rather deeper tinged with green, which convinces me that the surrounding mountains are full of minerals, and it may be rich in mines yet undiscovered, as well quarries of marble, from whence the churches and houses are ornamented, and even the streets paved, which, if polished and laid with art, would look like the finest mosaic work, being a variety of beautiful colours. I ought to retract the honourable title of street, none of them being broader than an alley, and impassable for any wheel-carriage, except a wheel-barrow. This town, which is the largest of twenty-five that are built on the banks of the lake of Isco, is near two miles long, and the figure of a semi-circle, and situated at the northern extremity. If it was a regular range of building, it would appear magnificent; but being founded accidentally by those who sought a refuge from the violences of those times, it is a mixture of shops and palaces, gardens and houses, which ascend a mile high, in a confusion which is not disagreeable. After this salutary water was found, and the purity of the air experienced, many people of quality chose it for their summer residence, and embellished it with several fine edifices. It was populous and flourishing, till that fatal plague, which overran all Europe in the year 1626. It made a terrible ravage in this place: the poor were almost destroyed, and the rich deserted it. Since that time it has never recovered its former splendour; few of the nobility returned; it is now only frequented during the water-drinking season. Several of the ancient palaces are degraded into lodging-houses, and others stand empty in a ruinous condition: one of these I have bought. I see you lift up your eyes in wonder at my indiscretion. I beg you to hear my reasons before you condemn me. In my infirm state of health the unavoidable noise of a public lodging is very disagreeable; and here is no private one: secondly, and chiefly, the whole purchase is but one hundred pounds, with a very pretty garden in terraces down to the water, and a court behind the house. It is founded on a rock, and the walls so thick, they will probably remain as long as the earth. It is true the apartments are in most tattered circumstances, without doors or windows. The beauty of the great saloon gained my affection: it is forty-two feet in length by twenty-five, proportionably high, opening into a balcony of the same length, with a marble ballustre: the ceiling and flooring are in good repair, but I have been forced to the

expense of covering the wall with new stucco; and the carpenter is at this minute taking measure of the windows in order to make frames for sashes. The great stairs are in such a declining way, it would be a very hazardous exploit to mount them: I never intend to attempt it. The state bed-chamber shall also remain for the sole use of the spiders that have taken possession of it, along with the grand cabinet, and some other pieces of magnificence, quite useless to me, and which would cost a great deal to make habitable. I have fitted up six rooms, with lodgings for five servants, which are all I ever will have in this place: and I am persuaded that I could make a profit if I would part with my purchase, having been very much favoured in the sale, which was by auction, the owner having died without children, and I believe he had never seen this mansion in his life, it having stood empty from the death of his grandfather. The governor bid for me, and nobody would bid against him. Thus I am become a citizen of Louvere, to the great joy of the inhabitants, not (as they would pretend) from their respect for my person, but I perceive they fancy I shall attract all the travelling English; and, to say truth, the singularity of the place is well worth their curiosity; but, as I have no correspondents, I may be buried here thirty years, and nobody know any thing of the matter.

I received the books you were so kind to send me, five days ago, but not the china, which I would not venture among the precipices that lead hither. I have only had time to read Lord Orrery's work, which has extremely entertained, and not at all surprised me, having the honour of being acquainted with him, and know him for one of those danglers after wit, who, like those after beauty, spend their time in humbly admiring, and are happy in being permitted to attend, though they are laughed at and only encouraged to gratify the insatiate vanity of those professed wits and beauties, who aim at being publicly distinguished in those characters. Dean Swift, by his lordship's own acco' 't, was so intoxicated with the love of flattery, he sought it a' 'ngst the lowest of people, and the silliest of women; and was never so well pleased with any companions as those that worshipped him, while he insulted them. It is a wonderful condescension in a man of quality to offer his incense in such a crowd, and think it an honour to share a friendship with Sheridan, (1) etc., especially being himself endowed with such universal merit as he displays in these Letters, where he shows that he is a poet, a patriot, a philosopher, a physician, a critic,

(1) Dr. Thomas Sheridan, the grandfather of R. Brinsley Sheridan, Esq.

a complete scholar, and most excellent moralist; shining in private life as a submissive son, a tender father, and zealous friend. His only error has been that love of learned ease which he has indulged in a solitude, which has prevented the world from being blest with such a general, minister, or admiral, being equal to any of these employments, if he would have turned his talents to the use of the public. Heaven be praised, he has now drawn his pen in its service, and given an example to mankind, that the most villanous actions, nay the most arrant nonsense, are only small blemishes in a great genius. I happen to think quite contrary, weak woman as I am. I have always avoided the conversation of those who endeavour to raise an opinion of their understanding, by ridiculing what both law and decency obliges them to revere; but whenever I have met with any of those bright spirits, who would be smart on sacred subjects, I have ever cut short their discourse by asking them if they had any lights and revelations by which they would propose new articles of faith? Nobody can deny but religion is a comfort to the distressed, a cordial to the sick, and sometimes a restraint on the wicked; therefore, whoever would argue or laugh it out of the world, without giving some equivalent for it, ought to be treated as a common enemy: but, when this language comes from a churchman, who enjoys large benefices and dignities from that very church he openly despises, it is an object of horror for which I want a name, and can only be excused by madness, which I think the Dean was always strongly touched with. His character seems to me a parallel with that of Caligula; and had he had the same power, would have made the same use of it. That emperor erected a temple to himself, where he was his own high-priest, preferred his horse to the highest honours in the state, professed enmity to the human race, and at last lost his life by a nasty jest on one of his inferiors, which I dare swear Swift would have made in his place. There can be no worse picture made of the Doctor's morals than he has given us himself in the letters printed by Pope. We see him vain, trifling, ungrateful to the memory of his pātron, that of Lord Oxford, making a servile court where he had any interested views, and meanly abusive when they were disappointed, and, as he says (in his own phrase) flying in the face of mankind, in company with his adorer Pope. It is pleasant to consider, that had it not been for the good nature of these very mortals they contemn, these two superior beings were entitled, by their birth and hereditary fortune, to be only a couple of link-boys. I am of opinion their friendship would have continued, though they had remained in the same kingdom: it had

a very strong foundation—the love of flattery on one side, and the love of money on the other. Pope courted with the utmost assiduity all the old men from whom he could hope a legacy, the Duke of Buckingham. Lord Peterborough, Sir G. Kneller, Lord Bolingbroke, Mr. Wycherly, Mr. Congreve, Lord Harcourt, etc., and I do not doubt projected to sweep the Dean's whole inheritance, if he could have persuaded him to throw up his deanery, and come to die in his house; and his general preaching against money was meant to induce people to throw it away, that he might pick it up. There cannot be a stronger proof of his being capable of any action for the sake of gain than publishing his literary correspondence, which lays open such a mixture of dulness and iniquity, that one would imagine it visible even to his most passionate admirers, if Lord Orrery did not show that smooth lines have as much inflence over some people as the authority of the church in these countries, where it can not only excuse, but sanctify any absurdity of villany whatever. It is remarkable that his lordship's family have been smatterers in wit and learning for three generations: his grandfather has left monuments of his good taste in several rhyming tragedies, and the romance of Parthenissa. His father began the world by giving his name to a treatise wrote by Atterbury and his club, which gained him great reputation; but (like Sir Martin Marall, who would fumble with his lute when the music was over) he published soon after a sad comedy of his own, and, what was worse, a *dismal* tragedy he had found among the first Earl of Orrery's papers. People could easier forgive his being partial to his own silly works, as a common frailty, than the want of judgment in producing a piece that dishonoured his father's memory.

Thus fell into dust a fame that had made a blaze by borrowed fire. To do justice to the present lord, I do not doubt this fine performance is all his own, and is a public benefit, if every reader has been as well diverted with it as myself. I verily believe it has contributed to the establisment of my health.

I have wrote two long letters to your father, to which I have had no answer. I hope he is well. The prosperity of you and yours is the warmest wish of, my dear child,

Your most affectionate mother, M. Wortley.

This letter is of a horrible length; I dare not read it over. I should have told you (to justify my folly as far as I can), here is no ground-rent to be paid, taxes for church and poor, or any imposition whatever, on houses. I desire, in the next parcel, you would send me Lady Frail, the Adventures of G. Edwards, and the Life of Lord Stair, which I suppose very su-

perficial, and partly fictitious; but as he was my acquaintance, I have some curiosity to see how he is represented.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

March 1, N. S. 1752.

DEAR CHILD,—I have now finished your books, and I believe you will think I have made quick despatch. To say truth, I have read night and day. Mr. Loveill gave me some entertainment, though there is but one character in it that I can find out. I do not doubt Mr. Depy is designed for Sir J. R. The adventure mentioned at Rome really happened to him, with this addition; that after he was got quit of his fear of being suspected in the interest of the P., he endeavoured to manifest his loyalty by railing at him in all companies, with all the warmth imaginable, on which his companions persuaded him, that his death was absolutely determined by that court; and he durst not stir out for some time, for fear of being assassinated; nor eat, for fear of being poisoned. I saw him at Venice, where, on hearing it said I had been at Constantinople, he asked Lord Mansel by what accident I made that journey. He answered, Mr. Wortley had been ambassador to the Porte. Sir J. replied, to what port? the port of Leghorn! I could relate many speeches of his of equal beauty, but I believe you are already tired of hearing of him, as much as I was with the memoirs of Miss H. Steuart; (1) who, being intended for an exemple of wit and virtue, is a jilt and a fool in every page. But while I was indolently perusing the marvellous figures she exhibits, no more resembling any thing in human nature than the wooden cut in the Seven Champions, I was roused into great surprize and indignation by the monstrous abuse of one of the very few women I have a real value for; I mean Lady B. Finch; (2) who is not only clearly meant by the mention of her library (she being the only lady at court that has one), but her very name at length; she being christened Cæcilia Isabella, tho' she chooses to be called by the latter. I always thought her conduct, in every light, so irreproachable,

(1) "Harriet Stewart" was the first novel written by Mrs. Charlotte Lennox, and certainly a very indifferent one.

(2) Lady Belle Finch, one of the many daughters of Lord Nottingham (Swift's "Dismal"), who before his death succeeded to the older title of Winchelsea. She was sister to the Duchess of Roxburgh, the Duchess of Cleveland, Lady Mansfield, Lady Rockingham, etc.; and was Lady of the Bedchamber to the Princess Amelia.

I did not think she had an enemy upon earth; I now see 'tis impossible to avoid them, especially in her situation. It is one of the misfortunes of a supposed court interest (perhaps you may know it by experience), even the people you have obliged hate you, if they do not think you have served to the utmost extent of a power that they fancy you are possessed of; which it may be is only imaginary.

On the other hand, I forgive Jo. Thompson two volumes of absurdities, for the sake of justice he has done to the memory of the Duke of Montagu; who really had (in my opinion) one of the most humane dispositions that ever appeared in the world. I was such an old fool as to weep over Clarissa Harlowe, like any milkmaid of sixteen over the ballad of the Ladies Fall. To say truth, the first volume softened me by a near resemblance of my maiden days; but on the whole 'tis most miserable stuff. Miss How, who is called a young lady of sense and honour, is not only extreme silly, but a more vicious character than Sally Martin; whose crimes are owing at first to seduction, and afterwards to necessity: while this virtuous damsel, without any reason, insults her mother at home, and ridicules her abroad; abuses the man she marries, and is impertinent and impudent with great applause. Even that model of perfection Clarissa is so faulty in her behaviour as to deserve little compassion. Any girl that runs away with a young fellow, without intending to marry him, should be carried to Bridewell or to Bedlam the next day. Yet the circumstances are so laid, as to inspire tenderness, notwithstanding the low style and absurd incidents; and I look upon this and Pamela to be two books that will do more general mischief than the works of Lord Rochester. There is something humorous in R. Random, that makes me believe that the author is H. Fielding. I am horridly afraid, I guess too well the writer of those abominable insipidities of Cornelia, Leonora, and the Ladies' Drawing Room. I fancy you are now saying, 'tis a sad thing to grow old; what does my poor mama mean by troubling me with criticisms on books, that nobody but herself will ever read? You must allow something to my solitude. I have a pleasure in writing to my dear child, and not many subjects to write upon. The adventures of people here would not at all amuse you, having no acquaintance with the persons concerned; and an account of myself would hardly gain credit, after having fairly owned to you how deplorably I was misled in regard to my own health; though I have all my life been on my guard against the information by the sense of hearing; it being one of my earliest observations, the universal inclination of humankind is to be led by the ears; and I am sometimes apt to ima-

gine, that they are given to men, as they are to pitchers, purposely that they may be carried about by them. This consideration should abate my wonder to see (as I do here) the most astonishing legends embraced as the most sacred truths, by those who have always heard them asserted, and never contradicted; they even place a merit in complying, in direct opposition to the evidence of all their other senses.

I am very much pleased with the account you give me of your father's health. I hope your own, and that of your family, is perfect; give my blessing to your little ones, and my compliments to Lord Bute, and think me ever,

Your most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, Aug. 20, 1752.

MY DEAR CHILD,—'Tis impossible to tell you to what degree I share with you in the misfortune that has happened. I do not doubt your own reason will suggest to you all the alleviations that can serve on so sad an occasion, and will not trouble you with the common place topics that are used, generally to no purpose, in letters of consolation. Disappointments ought to be less sensibly felt at my age than yours; yet I own I am so far affected by this, that I have need of all my philosophy to support it. However, let me beg of you not to indulge an useless grief, to the prejudice of your health, which is so necessary to your family. Every thing may turn out better than you expect. We see so darkly into futurity, we never know when we have real cause to rejoice or lament. The worst appearances have often happy consequences, as the best lead many times into the greatest misfortunes. Human prudence is very straitly bounded. What is most in our power, though little so, is the disposition of our own minds. Do not give way to melancholy; seek amusements; be willing to be diverted, and insensibly you will become so. Weak people only place a merit in affliction. A grateful remembrance, and whatever honour we can pay to their memory, is all that is owing to the dead. Tears and sorrow are no duties to them, and make us incapable of those we owe to the living.

I give you thanks for your care of my books. I yet retain, and carefully cherish, my taste for reading. If relays of eyes were to be hired like posthorses, I would never admit any but silent companions: they afford a constant variety of entertainment, which is almost the only one pleasing in the enjoyment, and inoffensive in the consequence. I am sorry your sight will not permit you a great use of it: the prattle of your little ones,

and friendship of Lord Bute, will supply the place of it. My dear child, endeavour to raise your spirits, and believe this advice comes from the tenderness of your most affectionate mother,

M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, Oct. 1, N. S. 1752.

I HAVE wrote five letters to my dear child, of which you have not acknowledged the receipt. I fear some, if not all of them, have miscarried, which may be attributed to Sir J. Gray's leaving Venice. You must now direct (at last), recommended à Monr. Smith, Consul de S. M. B.

The first of those letters I mention spoke of Lord K——; the second had a story of Lady O——; the third answered yours relating to Miss Gunnings; the fourth gave an account of our cardinal; and the last enclosed a note upon Child. You need not excuse to me taking notice of your carpet. I think you have great reason to value yourself on the performance, but will have better luck than I have had, if you can persuade any body else to do so. I could never get people to believe that I set a stitch, when I worked six hours in a day. You will confess my employments much more trifling than yours, when I own to you (between you and I), that my chief amusement is writing the history of my own time. It has been my fortune to have a more exact knowledge both of the persons and facts that have made the greatest figure in England in this age, than is common; and I take pleasure in putting together what I know, with an impartiality that is altogether unusual. Distance of time and place has totally blotted from my mind all traces either of resentment or prejudice; and I speak with the same indifference of the court of Great Britain as I should do of that of Augustus Cæsar. I hope you have not so ill opinion of me to think I am turning author in my old age. I can assure you I regularly burn every quire as soon as it is finished; and mean nothing more than to divert my solitary hours. I know mankind too well to think they are capable of receiving truth, much less of applauding it: or, were it otherwise, applause to me is as insignificant as garlands on the dead. I have no concern beyond my own family. Pray write as often as you can to your most affectionate mother,

M. WORTLEY.

Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Brescia, Oct. 10, 1752.

THIS letter will be very dull or very peevish (perhaps both). I am at present much out of humour, being on the edge of a quarrel with my friend and patron, the Cardinal Querini. (1) He is really a good-natured and generous man, and spends his vast revenue in (what he thinks) the service of his country, beside contributing largely to the building a new cathedral, which, when finished, will stand in the first rank of fine churches (where he has already the comfort of seeing his own busto, finely done both within and without). He has founded a magnificent college for one hundred scholars, which I don't doubt he will endow very nobly, and greatly enlarged and embellished his episcopal palace. He has joined to it a public library, which, when I saw it, was a very beautiful room: it is now finished, furnished, and open twice in a week with proper attendance. Yesterday here arrived one of his chief chaplains, with a long compliment, which concluded with desiring I would send him my works; having dedicated one of his cases to English books, he intended my labours should appear in the most conspicuous place. I was struck dumb for some time with this astonishing request; when I recovered my vexatious surprize (foreseeing the consequence), I made answer, I was highly sensible of the honour designed me, but, upon my word, I had never printed a single line in my life. I was answered in a cold tone, that his Eminence could send for them to England, but they would be a long time coming, and with some hazard; and that he had flattered himself I would not refuse him such a favour, and I need not be ashamed of seeing my name in a collection where he admitted none but the most eminent authors. It was to no purpose to endeavour to convince him. He would not stay dinner, though earnestly invited; and went away with the air of one that thought he had reason to be offended. I know his master will have the same sentiments, and I shall pass in his opinion for a monster of ingratitude, while it is the blackest of vices, in my opinion, and of which I am utterly incapable—I really could cry for vexation.—

Sure nobody ever had such various provocations to print as myself. I have seen things I have wrote, so mangled and falsified, I have scarce known them. I have seen poems I never read, published with my name at length; and others, that were

(1) Cardinal Angelo Maria Querini. He published the works of St. Ephrem Syrus, in six volumes, folio, 1732; and the Life of Pope Paul II. quarto, 1740. See De Bure, Bibliographie Instructive, etc.

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truly and singly wrote by me, printed under the names of others. I have made myself easy under all these mortifications, by the reflection I did not deserve them, having never aimed at the vanity of popular applause; but I own my philosophy is not proof against losing a friend, and it may be making an enemy of one to whom I am obliged.

I confess I have often been complimented, since I have been in Italy, on the books I have given the public. I used at first to deny it with some warmth; but finding I persuaded nobody, I have of late contented myself with laughing whenever I heard it mentioned, knowing the character of a learned woman is far from being ridiculous in this country, the greatest families being proud of having produced female writers; and a Milanese lady being now professor of mathematics in the university of Bologna, invited thither by a most obliging letter, wrote by the present Pope, who desired her to accept of the chair, not as a recompense for her merit, but to do honour to a town which is under his protection. To say truth, there is no part of the world where our sex is treated with so much contempt as in England. I do not complain of men for having engrossed the government: in excluding us from all degrees of power, they preserve us from many fatigues, many dangers, and perhaps many crimes. The small proportion of authority that has fallen to my share (only over a few children and servants) has always been a burden, and never a pleasure, and I believe every one finds it so, who acts from a maxim (I think an indispensible duty), that whoever is under my power is under my protection. Those who find a joy in inflicting hardships, and seeing objects of misery, may have other sensations; but I have always thought corrections, even when necessary, as painful to the giver as to the sufferer, and am therefore very well satisfied with the state of subjection we are placed in: but I think it the highest injustice to be debarred the entertainment of my closet, and that the same studies, which raise the character of a man, should hurt that of a woman. We are educated in the grossest ignorance, and no art omitted to stifle our natural reason; if some few get above their nurses' instructions, our knowledge must rest concealed, and be as useless to the world as gold in the mine. I am now speaking according to our English notions, which may wear out, some ages hence, along with others equally absurd. It appears to me the strongest proof of a clear understanding in Longinus (in every light acknowledged one of the greatest men among the ancients), when I find him so far superior to vulgar prejudices, as to choose his two examples of fine writing from a Jew (at that time the most despised

people upon earth) and a woman. Our modern wits would be so far from quoting, they would scarce own they had read the works of such contemptible creatures, though perhaps they would condescend to steal from them, at the same time they declared they were below their notice: this subject is apt to run away with me; I will trouble you with no more of it.

M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, Oct. 20, N. S. 1752.

DEAR CHILD,—I have now read over Richardson—he sinks horribly in his third volume (he does so in his story of Clarissa). When he talks of Italy, it is plain he is no better acquainted with it than he is with the kingdom of Mancomingo. He might have made his Sir Charles's amour with Clementina begin in a convent, where the pensioners sometimes take great liberties; but that such familiarity should be permitted in her father's house, is as repugnant to custom, as it would be in London for a young lady of quality to dance on the ropes at Bartholomew fair: neither does his hero behave to her in a manner suitable to his nice notions. It was impossible a discerning man should not see her passion early enough to check it, if he had really designed it. His conduct puts me in mind of some ladies I have known, who could never find out a man to be in love with them, let him do or say what he would, till he made a direct attempt, and then they were so surprised, I warrant you! nor do I approve Sir Charles's offered compromise (as he calls it). There must be a great indifference as to religion on both sides, to make so strict a union as marriage tolerable between people of such distinct persuasions. He seems to think women have no souls, by agreeing so easily that his daughters should be educated in bigotry and idolatry. You will perhaps think this last a hard word; yet it is not difficult to prove, that either the papists are guilty of idolatry, or the pagans never were so. You may see, in Lucian (in his vindication of his images), that they did not take their statues to be real gods, but only the representations of them. The same doctrine may be found in Plutarch; and it is all the modern priests have to say in excuse for their worshipping wood and stone, though they cannot deny, at the same time, that the vulgar are apt to confound that distinction. I always, if possible, avoid controversial disputes: whenever I cannot do it, they are very short. I ask my adversary if he believes the Scripture; when that is answered affirmatively, their church may be proved by a child of ten

years old, contradictory to it, in their most important points. My second question is, if they think St. Peter and St. Paul knew the true Christian religion? The constant reply is, O yes. Then say I, purgatory, transubstantiation, invocation of Saints, adoration of the Virgin, relics (of which they might have had a cart load), and observation of Lent, is no part of it, since they neither taught nor practised any of these things. Vows of celibacy are not more contrary to nature, than to the positive precept of St. Paul. He mentions a very common case, in which people are obliged, by conscience, to marry. No mortals can promise that case shall never be theirs, which depends on the disposition of the body as much as a fever; and 'tis as reasonable to engage never to feel the one as the other. He tells us, the marks of the Holy Spirit are charity, humility, truth, and long suffering. Can any thing be more uncharitable than damning eternally so many millions for not believing what they never heard? or prouder than calling their head a Vice-god? Pious frauds are avowedly permitted, and persecution applauded: these maxims cannot be dictated by the spirit of peace, which is so warmly preached in the gospel. The creeds of the apostles, and council of Nice, do not speak of the mass, or real presence, as articles of belief; and Athanasius asserts, whosoever believes according to them shall be saved. Jesus-Christ, in answer to the lawyer, bids him love God above all things, and his neighbour as himself, as all that is necessary to salvation. When he describes the last judgment, he does not examine what sect, or what church, men were of, but how far they had been beneficial to mankind. Faith cannot determine reward or punishment, being involuntary, and only the consequence of conviction: we do not believe what we please, but what appears to us with the face of truth. As I do not mistake exclamation, invective, or ridicule, for argument, I never recriminate on the lives of their Popes and Cardinals, when they urge the character of Henry the Eighth; I only answer, good actions are often done by ill men through interested motives, and 't is the common method of Providence to bring good out of evil: history, both sacred and profane, furnishes many examples of it. When they tell me I have forsook the worship of my ancestors, I say I have had more ancestors heathen than Christian, and my faith is certainly ancienter than theirs, since I have added nothing to the practice of the primitive professors of Christianity. As to the prosperity or extent of the dominion of their church, which Cardinal Bellarmin counts among the proofs of its orthodoxy, the Mahometans, who have larger empires, and have made a quicker progress, have a better plea

for the visible protection of Heaven. If the fopperies of their religion were only fopperies, they ought to be complied with, whenever it is established, like any ridiculous dress in fashion; but I think them impieties; their devotions are a scandal to humanity from their nonsense; the mercenary deceits, and barbarous tyranny of their ecclesiastics, inconsistent with moral honesty. If they object to the diversity of our sects as a mark of reprobation, I desire them to consider that objection has equal force against Christianity in general. When they thunder with the names of fathers and councils, they are surprised to find me as well (often better) acquainted with them, than themselves. I show them the variety of their doctrines, their violent contests, and various factions, instead of that union they boast of. I have never been attacked a second time in any of the towns where I have resided, and perhaps shall never be so again after my last battle, which was with an old priest, a learned man, particularly esteemed as a mathematician, and who has a head and heart as warm as poor Whiston's. When I first came hither, he visited me every day, and talked of me every where with such violent praise, that, had we been young people, God knows what would have been said. I have always the advantage of being quite calm on a subject which they cannot talk of without heat. He desired I would put on paper what I had said. I immediately wrote one side of a sheet, leaving the other for his answer. He carried it with him, promising to bring it the next day, since which time I have never seen it, though I have often demanded it, being ashamed of my defective Italian. I fancy he sent it to his friend the Archbishop of Milan. I have given over asking for it, as a desperate debt. He still visits me, but seldom, and in a cold sort of a way. When I have found disputants I less respected, I have sometimes taken pleasure in raising their hopes by my concessions: they are charmed when I agree with them in the number of the sacraments; but are horridly disappointed when I explain myself by saying the word sacrament is not to be found either in Old or New Testament; and one must be very ignorant not to know it is taken from the listing oath of the Roman soldiers, and means nothing more than a solemn, irrevocable engagement. Parents vow, in infant baptism, to educate their children in the Christian religion, which they take upon themselves by confirmation; the Lord's supper is frequently renewing the same oath. Ordination and matrimony are solemn vows of a different kind: confession includes a vow of revealing all we know, and reforming what is amiss: extreme unction, the last vow, that we have lived in the faith we were baptised:

in this sense they are all sacraments. As to the mysteries preached since, they were all invented long after, and some of them repugnant to the primitive institution. This digression has carried me far from my criticism. You will laugh at my making any, on a work below examination. It may be of use to my grand-daughters. I am persuaded he is a favourite author in all the nurseries in England, and has done much harm in the boarding schools, therefore ought to have his absurdities detected. You will think me angry with him for repeating a saying of mine, accompanied with a description of my person, which resembles me as much as one of the giants in Guildhall, and plainly shows he never saw me in his life. Indeed, I think, after being so many years dead and buried, I might be suffered to enjoy the right of the departed, and rest in peace. I cannot guess how I can possibly have incurred his indignation, except he takes for truth the literary correspondence between me and the Mrs. Argens, whom I never saw, and who, with many high compliments, have attributed to me sentiments that never came into my head, and among them a criticism on Pamela, who is, however, more favourably treated than she deserves.

The book of letters I mention never came to my hands till some time after it was printed, accidentally at Thoulouse. I have need of all my philosophy on these occasions; though, they happen so often, I ought to be accustomed to them. When I print, I submit to be answered, and criticised; but as I never did, 'tis hard to be abused for other people's follies. A light thing said in gay company, should not be called upon for a serious defence, especially when it injures nobody. It is certain there are as many marriages as ever. Richardson is so eager for the multiplication of them, I suppose he is some parish curate, whose chief profit depends on weddings and christenings. He is not a man-midwife; for he would be better skilled in physic than to think fits and madness any ornament to the characters of his heroines: though this Sir Charles had no thoughts of marrying Clementina till she had lost her wits, and the divine Clarissa never acted prudently till she was in the same condition, and then very wisely desired to be carried to Bedlam, which is really all that is to be done in that case. Madness is as much a corporal distemper as the gout or asthma, never occasioned by affliction, or to be cured by the enjoyment of extravagant wishes. Passion may indeed bring on a fit, but the disease is lodged in the blood, and it is not more ridiculous to attempt to relieve the gout by an embroidered slipper, than to restore reason by the gratification of wild desires.

Richardson is as ignorant in morality as he is in anatomy, when he declares abusing an obliging husband, or an indulgent parent, to be an innocent recreation. His Anna How and Charlotte Grandison are recommended as patterns of charming pleasantry, and applauded by his saint-like dames, who mistake folly for wit and humour, and impudence and ill-nature for spirit and fire. Charlotte behaves like a humoursome child, and should have been used like one, and well whipped in the presence of her friendly confidante Harriet. Lord Halifax very justly tells his daughter, that a husband's kindness is to be received by a wife, even when he is drunk, and though it is wrapped up in never so much impertinence. Charlotte acts with an ingratitude that I think too black for human nature, with such coarse jokes and low expressions as are only to be heard among the lowest class of people. Women of that rank often plead a right to beat their husbands, when they don't cuckold them; and I believe this author was never admitted into higher company, and should confine his pen to the amours of housemaids, and the conversation at the steward's table, where I imagine he has sometimes intruded, though oftener in the servants' hall: yet, if the title be not a puff, this work has passed three editions. I do not forgive him his disrespect of old china, which is below nobody's taste, since it has been the Duke of Argyll's, whose understanding has never been doubted either by his friends or enemies.

Richardson never had probably money enough to purchase any, or even a ticket for a masquerade, which gives him such an aversion to them; though this intended satire against them is very absurd on the account of his Harriet, since she might have been carried off in the same manner if she had been going from supper with her grandame. Her whole behaviour, which he designs to be exemplary, is equally blameable and ridiculous. She follows the maxim of Clarissa, of declaring all she thinks to all the people she sees, without reflecting that in this mortal state of imperfection, fig leaves are as necessary for our minds as our bodies, and 't is as indecent to show all we think, as all we have. He has no idea of the manners of high life: his old Lord M. talks in the style of a country justice, and his virtuous young ladies romp like the wenches round a maypole. Such liberties as pass between Mr. Lovelace and his cousins, are not to be excused by the relation. I should have been much astonished if Lord Denbigh should have offered to kiss me; and I dare swear Lord Trentham never attempted such an impertinence to you.

With all my contempt I will take notice of one good thing;

I mean his project of an English monastery. It was a favourite scheme of mine when I was fifteen; and had I then been mistress of an independent fortune, would certainly have executed it, and elected myself lady abbess. There would you and your ten children have been lost for ever. Yet such was the disposition of my early youth: so much was I unlike those girls that declare, if they had been born of the male kind they should have been great rakes, which is owning they have strong inclinations to—— and drinking, and want only opportunity and impunity to exert them vigorously.

This tedious miscellany of a letter is promised to be delivered into your own hand; nay farther, that I shall have an account how you look, how you are dressed, and in what manner your room is furnished. Nothing relating to you is indifferent to me; and if the performance answers the engagement, it will be a vast pleasure to your most affectionate mother,

M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, Jan. 28, N. S. 1753.

DEAR CHILD,—You have given me a great deal of satisfaction by your account of your eldest daughter. I am particularly pleased to hear she is a good arithmetician; it is the best proof of understanding: the knowledge of numbers is one of the chief distinctions between us and brutes. If there is any thing in blood, you may reasonably expect your children should be endowed with an uncommon share of good sense. Mr. Wortley's family and mine have both produced some of the greatest men that have been born in England: I mean Admiral Sandwich, and my grandfather, who was distinguished by the name of Wise William. (1) I have heard Lord Bute's father mentioned as an extraordinary genius, though he had not many opportunities of showing it; and his uncle the present Duke of Argyll (2) has one of the best heads I ever knew. I will therefore speak to you as supposing Lady Mary not only capable, but desirous of learning: in that case by all means let her be indulged in it. You will tell me I did not make it a part of your education: your prospect was very different from hers. As you had much in your circumstances to attract the

(1) William Pierrepont, second son of Robert Earl of Kingston, died 1679, aged 71.

(2) The Duke of Argyle here mentioned was Archibald, who, before he succeeded his brother John Duke of Argyle in the dukedom, was Earl of Islay.

highest offers, it seemed your business to learn how to live in the world, as it is hers, to know how to be easy out of it. It is the common error of builders and parents to follow some plan they think beautiful (and perhaps is so), without considering that nothing is beautiful which is displaced. Hence we see so many edifices raised that the raisers can never inhabit, being too large for their fortunes. Vistos are laid open over barren heaths, and apartments contrived for a coolness very agreeable in Italy, but killing in the north of Britain: thus every woman endeavours to breed her daughter a fine lady, qualifying her for a station in which she will never appear, and at the same time incapacitating her for that retirement, to which she is destined. Learning, if she has a real taste for it, will not only make her contented, but happy in it. No entertainment is so cheap as reading, nor any pleasure so lasting. She will not want new fashions, nor regret the loss of expensive diversions, or variety of company, if she can be amused with an author, in her closet. To render this amusement complete, she should be permitted to learn the languages. I have heard it lamented that boys lose so many years in mere learning of words: this is no objection to a girl, whose time is not so precious: she cannot advance herself in any profession, and has therefore more hours to spare; and as you say her memory is good, she will be very agreeably employed this way. There are two cautions to be given on this subject: first, not to think herself learned, when she can read Latin, or even Greek. Languages are more properly to be called vehicles of learning than learning itself, as may be observed in many schoolmasters, who, though perhaps critics in grammar, are the most ignorant fellows upon earth. True knowledge consists in knowing things, not words I would no farther wish her a linguist than to enable her to read books in their originals, that are often corrupted, and are always injured by translations. Two hours' applicatoin every morning will bring this about much sooner than you can imagine, and she will have leisure enough beside, to run over the English poetry, which is a more important part of a woman's education than it is generally supposed. Many a young damsel has been ruined by a fine copy of verses, which she would have laughed at if she had known it had been stolen from Mr. Waller. I remember, when I was a girl, I saved one of my companions from destruction, who communicated to me an epistle, she was quite charmed with. As she had naturally a good taste, she observed the lines were not so smooth as Prior's or Pope's, but had more thought and spirit than any of theirs. She was wonderfully delighted with such

a demonstration of her lover's sense and passion, and not a little pleased with her own charms, that had force enough to inspire such elegancies. In the midst of this triumph I showed her, that they were taken from Randolph's poems, and the unfortunate transcriber was dismissed with the scorn he deserved. To say truth, the poor plagiary was very unlucky to fall into my hands; that author being no longer in fashion, would have escaped any one of less universal reading than myself. You should encourage your daughter to talk over with you what she reads; and as you are very capable of distinguishing, take care she does not mistake pert folly for wit and humour, or rhyme for poetry, which are the common errors of young people, and have a train of ill consequences. The second caution to be given her (and which is most absolutely necessary) is to conceal whatever learning she attains, with as much solicitude as she would hide crookedness or lameness: the parade of it can only serve to draw on her the envy, and consequently the most inveterate hatred, of all he and she fools, which will certainly be at least three parts in four of her acquaintance. The use of knowledge in our sex, beside the amusement of solitude, is to moderate the passions, and learn to be contented with a small expense, which are the certain effects of a studious life; and it may be preferable even to that fame which men have engrossed to themselves, and will not suffer us to share. You will tell me I have not observed this rule myself; but you are mistaken: it is only inevitable accident that has given me any reputation that way. I have always carefully avoided it, and ever thought it a misfortune. The explanation of this paragraph would occasion a long digression, which I will not trouble you with, it being my present design only to say what I think useful for the instruction of my grand-daughter, which I have much at heart. If she has the same inclination (I should say passion) for learning that I was born with, history, geography, and philosophy will furnish her with materials to pass away cheerfully a longer life than is allotted to mortals. I believe there are few heads capable of making Sir Isaac Newton's calculations, but the result of them is not difficult to be understood by a moderate capacity. Do not fear this should make her affect the character of Lady ——, or Lady ——, or Mrs. ——: those women are ridiculous, not because they have learning, but because they have it not. One thinks herself a complete historian, after reading Echard's Roman History; another a profound philosopher, having got by heart some of Pope's *unintelligible* essays; and a third an able divine on the strength of Whitfield's

sermons: thus you hear them screaming politics and controversy.

It is a saying of Thucydides, that ignorance is bold, and knowledge reserved. Indeed it is impossible to be far advanced in it, without being more humbled by a conviction of human ignorance, than elated by learning. At the same time I recommend books, I neither exclude work nor drawing. I think it as scandalous for a woman not to know how to use a needle, as for a man not to know how to use a sword. I was once extremely fond of my pencil, and it was a great mortification to me when my father turned off my master, having made a considerable progress for the short time I learnt. My over eagerness in the pursuit of it had brought a weakness in my eyes, that made it necessary to leave off; and all the advantage I got was the improvement of my hand. I see, by hers, that practice will make her a ready writer; she may attain it by serving you for a secretary, when your health or affairs make it troublesome to you to write yourself; and custom will make it an agreeable amusement to her. She cannot have too many for that station of life which will probably be her fate. The ultimate end of your education was to make you a good wife (and I have the comfort to hear that you are one): hers ought to be, to make her happy in a virgin state. I will not say it is happier; but it is undoubtedly sa'er than any marriage. In a lottery, where there is (at the lowest computation) ten thousand blanks to a prize, it is the most prudent choice, not to venture. I have always been so thoroughly persuaded of this truth, that, notwithstanding the flattering views I had for you (as I never intended you a sacrifice to my vanity), I thought I owed you the justice to lay before you all the hazards attending matrimony: you may recollect I did so in the strongest manner. Perhaps you may have more success in the instructing your daughter: she has so much company at home, she will not need seeking it abroad, and will more readily take the notions, you think fit to give her. As you were alone in my family, it would have been thought a great cruelty to suffer you no companions of your own age, especially having so many near relations, and I do not wonder their opinions influenced yours. I was not sorry to see you not determined on a single life, knowing it was not your father's intention, and contented myself with endeavouring to make your home so easy that you might not be in haste to leave it.

I am afraid you will think this a very long insignificant letter. I hope the kindness of the design will excuse it, being willing to give you every proof in my power that I am

Your most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, Feb. 19, N. S. 1753.

MY DEAR CHILD,— I gave you some general thoughts on the education of your children in my last letter; but fearing you should think I neglected your request, by answering it with too much conciseness, I am resolved to add to it what little I know on that subject, and which may perhaps be useful to you in a concern, with which you seem so nearly affected.

People commonly educate their children as they build their houses, according to some plan they think beautiful, without considering whether it is suited to the purposes for which they are designed. Almost all girls of quality are educated as if they were to be great ladies, which is often as little to be expected, as an immoderate heat of the sun in the north of Scotland. You should teach yours to confine their desires to probabilities, to be as useful as is possible to themselves, and to think privacy (as it is) the happiest state of life. I do not doubt your giving them all the instructions necessary to form them to a virtuous life; but 't is a fatal mistake to do this, without proper restrictions. Vices are often hid under the name of virtues, and the practice of them followed by the worst of consequences. Sincerity, friendship, piety, disinterestedness, and generosity, are all great virtues; but pursued without discretion become criminal. I have seen ladies indulge their own ill-humour by being very rude and impertinent, and think they deserved approbation, by saying I love to speak truth. One of your acquaintances made a ball the next day after her mother died, to show she was sincere. I believe your own reflection will furnish you with but too many examples of the ill effects of the rest of the sentiments I have mentioned, when too warmly embraced. They are generally recommended to young people without limits or distinction, and this prejudice hurries them into great misfortunes, while they are applauding themselves in the noble practice (as they fancy) of very eminent virtues.

I cannot help adding (out of my real affection to you), that I wish you would moderate that fondness you have for your children. I do not mean you should abate any part of your care, or not do your duty to them in its utmost extent; but I would have you early prepare yourself for disappointments, which are heavy in proportion to their being surprising. It is hardly possible, in such a number, that none should be unhappy; prepare yourself against a misfortune of that kind. I confess there is hardly any more difficult to support; yet, it is certain, imagination has a great share in the pain of it, and it is

more in our power (than it is commonly believed) to soften whatever ills are founded or augmented by fancy. Strictly speaking, there is but one real evil, I mean, acute pain; all other complaints are so considerably diminished by time, that it is plain the grief is owing to our passion, since the sensation of it vanishes when that is over.

There is another mistake, I forgot to mention, usual in mothers; if any of their daughters are beauties, they take great pains to persuade them that they are ugly, or at least that they think so, which the young woman never fails to believe springs from envy, and is perhaps not much in the wrong. I would, if possible, give them a just notion of their figure, and show them how far it is valuable. Every advantage has its price, and may be either over or under valued. It is the common doctrine of (what are called) good books, to inspire a contempt of beauty, riches, greatness, etc. which has done as much mischief among the young of our sex as an over eager desire of them. Why they should not look on those things as blessings where they are bestowed, though not necessaries that it is impossible to be happy without, I cannot conceive. I am persuaded the ruin of Lady F— M— was in great measure owing to the notions given her by the good people that had the care of her. 'T is true, her circumstances and your daughters' are very different: they should be taught to be content with privacy, and yet not neglect good fortune, if it should be offered them.

I am afraid, I have tired you with my instructions. I do not give them as believing my age has furnished me with superior wisdom, but in compliance with your desire, and being fond of every opportunity that gives a proof of the tenderness with which I am ever Your affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

I should be glad if you sent me the third volume of Campbell's Architecture, and with it any other entertaining books. I have seen the Duchess of Marlborough's Memoirs, but should be glad of the Apology for a late resignation. As to the ale, 'tis now so late in the year, it is impossible it should come good. You do not mention your father; my last letter from him told me he intended soon for England.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, March 6, 1753.

I CANNOT help writing a sort of apology for my last letter, foreseeing that you will think it wrong, or at least Lord Bute will be extremely shocked, at the proposal of a learned educa-

tion for daughters, which the generality of men believe to be as great a profanation, as the clergy would do, if the laity should presume to exercise the functions of the priesthood. I desire you would take notice, I would not have learning enjoined them as a task, but permitted as a pleasure, if their genius leads them naturally to it. I look upon my granddaughters as a sort of lay nuns: destiny may have laid up other things for them, but they have no reason to expect to pass their time otherwise, than their aunts do at present; and I know, by experience, it is in the power of study not only to make solitude tolerable, but agreeable. I have now lived almost seven years in a stricter retirement than yours in the Isle of Bute, and can assure you I have never had half an hour heavy on my hands, for want of something to do. Whoever will cultivate their own mind, will find full employment. Every virtue does not only require great care in the planting, but as much daily solicitude in cherishing, as exotic fruits and flowers. The vices and passions (which I am afraid are the natural product of the soil) demand perpetual weeding. Add to this the search after knowledge (every branch of which is entertaining), and the longest life is too short for the pursuit of it; which, though in some regard confined to very strait limits, leaves still a vast variety of amusements to those capable of tasting them, which is utterly impossible to be attained by those that are blinded by prejudice, the certain effect of an ignorant education. My own was one of the worst in the world, being exactly the same as Clarissa Harlow's: her pious Mrs. Norton so perfectly resembling my governess, who had been nurse to my mother, I could almost fancy the author was acquainted with her, she took so much pains, from my infancy, to fill my head with superstitious tales and false notions. It was none of her fault, that I am not at this day afraid of witches and hobgoblins, or turned methodist. Almost all girls are bred after this manner. I believe you are the only woman (perhaps I might say, person) that never was either frighted or cheated into any thing by your parents. I can truly affirm, I never deceived any body in my life, excepting (which I confess has often happened undesigned) by speaking plainly; as Earl Stanhope used to say (during his ministry) he always imposed on the foreign ministers by telling them the naked truth, which, as they thought *impossible* to come from the mouth of a statesman, they never failed to write information to their respective courts directly contrary to the assurances he gave them. Most people confound the ideas of sense and cunning, though there are really no two things in nature more opposite:

it is, in part, from this false reasoning, the unjust custom prevails of debarring our sex from the advantages of learning, the men fancying the improvement of our understandings would only furnish us with more art to deceive them, which is directly contrary to the truth. Fools are always enterprising, not seeing the difficulties of deceit, or the ill consequences of detection. I could give many examples of ladies whose ill conduct has been very notorious, which has been owing to that ignorance which has exposed them to idleness, which is justly called the mother of mischief. There is nothing so like the education of a woman of quality as that of a prince: they are taught to dance, and the exterior part of what is called good breeding, which if they attain, they are extraordinary creatures in their kind, and have all the accomplishments required by their directors. The same characters are formed by the same lessons, which inclines me to think (if I dare say it) that nature has not placed us in an inferior rank to men, no more than the females of other animals, where we see no distinction of capacity; though, I am persuaded, if there was a commonwealth of rational horses (as Doctor Swift has supposed), it would be an established maxim among them, that a mare could *not* be taught to pace. I could add a great deal on this subject, but I am not now endeavouring to remove the prejudices of mankind; my only design is, to point out to my granddaughters the method of being contented with that retreat, to which unforeseen circumstances may oblige them, and which is perhaps preferable to all the show of public life. It has always been my inclination. Lady Stafford (who knew me better than any body else in the world, both from her own just discernment, and my heart being ever as open to her as myself) used to tell me, my true vocation was a monastery; and I now find, by experience, more sincere pleasures with my books and garden, than all the flutter of a court could give me.

If you follow my advice in relation to Lady Mary, my correspondence may be of use to her; and I shall very willingly give her those instructions that may be necessary in the pursuit of her studies. Before her age, I was in the most regular commerce with my grandmother, though the difference of our time of life was much greater, she being past forty-five when she married my grandfather. She died at ninety-six, retaining, to the last, the vivacity and clearness of her understanding, which was very uncommon. You cannot remember her, being then in your nurse's arms. I conclude with repeating to you, I only recommend, but am far from commanding, which I think I have no right to do. I tell you my sentiments, because you

desired to know them, and hope you will receive them, with some partiality, as coming from

Your most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, March 16, N. S. 1753.

DEAR CHILD,—I received yours of December 20th, this morning, which gave me great pleasure, by the account of your good health, and that of your father. I know nothing else could give me any at present, being sincerely afflicted for the death of the Doge. (1) He is lamented here by all ranks of people, as their common parent. He really answered the idea of Lord Bolingbroke's imaginary patriotic prince, and was the only example I ever knew of having passed through the greatest employments, and most important negociations, without ever making an enemy. When I was at Venice, which was some months before his election, he was the leading voice in the senate, which would have been dangerous in the hands of a bad man: yet he had the art to silence envy; and I never once heard an objection to his character, or even an insinuation to his disadvantage. I attribute this peculiar happiness to be owing to the sincere benevolence of his heart, joined with an easy cheerfulness of temper, which made him agreeable to all companies, and a blessing to all his dependents. Authority appeared so humble in him, no one wished it less, except himself, who would sometimes lament the weight of it, as robbing him too much of the conversation of his friends, in which he placed his chief delight, being so little ambitious, that, to my certain knowledge, far from caballing to gain that elevation to which he was raised, he would have refused it, if he had not looked upon the acceptation of it as a duty due to his country. This is only speaking of him in the public light. As to myself, he always professed, and gave me every demonstration of the most cordial friendship. Indeed, I received every good office from him I could have expected from a tender father, or a kind brother; and though I have not seen him since my last return to Italy, he never omitted an opportunity of expressing the greatest regard for me, both in his discourse to others, and upon all occasions, where he thought he could be useful to me. I do not doubt that I shall very sensibly miss the influence of his good intentions.

(1) Pietro Grimani died 1762. He was elected Doge of Venice in 1741, and was succeeded by Francesco Loredano.

You will think I dwell too long on this melancholy subject. I will turn to one widely different, in taking notice of the dress of you London ladies, who I find take up the Italian fashion of going in the hair; it is here only the custom of the peasants, and the unmarried women of quality, excepting in the heat of summer, when any cap would be almost insupportable. I have often smiled to myself in viewing our assemblies (which they call conversations) at Louvere, the gentlemen being all in light night-caps and night-gowns (under which I am informed they wear no breeches) and slippers, and the ladies in their stays and smock-sleeves, tied with ribbands, and a single lutestring petticoat: there is not a hat or a hoop to be seen. It is true this dress is called *vestimenti di confidenza*, and they do not appear in it in town, but in their own chambers, and that only during the summer months.

My paper admonishes me to conclude by assuring you that I am ever your most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, May 2, 1753.

I GIVE you thanks, dear child, for the entertaining account of your present diversions. I find the public calamities have no influence on the pleasures of the town. I remember very well the play of the Revenge, having been once acquainted with a party that intended to represent it, not one of whom is now alive. I wish you had told me who acted the principal parts. I suppose Lord Bute was Alonzo, by the magnificence of his dress. I think they have mended their choice in the Orphan: I saw it played at Westminster school, where Lord Erskine was Monimia, and then one of the most beautiful figures that could be seen. I have had here (in low life) some amusements of the same sort. I believe I wrote you word I intended to go to the opera at Brescia; but the weather being cold, and the roads bad, prevented my journey; and the people of this village (which is the largest I know, the curate tells me he has two thousand communicants) presented me a petition for leave to erect a theatre in my saloon. This house has stood empty many years before I took it, and they were accustomed to turn the stables into a play-house every carnival: it is now occupied by my horses, and they had no other place proper for a stage. I easily complied with their request, and was surprised at the beauty of their scenes, which, though painted by a country painter, are better coloured, and the perspective better managed, than in any of the second rate theatres in London. I

liked it so well, it is not yet pulled down. The performance was yet more suprising, the actors being all peasants; but the Italians have so natural a genius for comedy, they acted as well as if they had been brought up to nothing else, particularly the *arlequino*, who far surpassed any of our English, though only the taylor of the village, and I am assured never saw a play in any other place. It is pity they have not better poets, the pieces being not at all superior to our drolls. The music, habits, and illumination, were at the expense of the parish, and the whole entertainment, which lasted the three days of the carnival, cost me only a barrel of wine, which I gave the actors, and is not so dear as small beer in London. At present, as the old song says—

All my whole care,
Is my farming affair,
To make my corn grow, and my apple-trees bear.

My improvements give me great pleasure, and so much profit, that if I could live a hundred years longer, I should certainly provide for all my grand children : but alas! as the Italians say, *son sonato ventiquatro 'ora*: and it is not long I must expect to write myself your most affectionate mother,

M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, June 3, N. S. 1753.

MY DEAR CHILD,—You see I was not mistaken in supposing we should have disputes concerning your daughters, if we were together, since we can differ even at this distance. The sort of learning that I recommended is not so expensive, either of time or money, as dancing, and in my opinion likely to be of much more use to Lady ——, if her memory and apprehension are what you represented them to me. However, every one has a right to educate their children after their own way, and I shau speak no more on that subject. I was so much pleased with the character you gave her, that had there been any possibility of her undertaking so long a journey, I should certainly have asked for her; and I think out of such a number you migh have spared her. I own my affection prevailed over my judg-ment in this thought, since nothing can be more imprudent than undertaking the management of another's child. I verily be-lieve that had I carried six daughters out of England with me, I could have disposed of them all advantageously. The winter I passed at Rome there was an unusual concourse of English, many of them with great estates, and their own masters : as

they had no admittance to the Roman ladies, nor understood the language, they had no way of passing their evenings but in my apartment, where I had always a full drawing-room. Their governors encouraged their assiduities as much as they could, finding I gave them lessons of economy and good conduct; and my authority was so great, it was a common threat amongst them, I'll tell Lady Mary what you say. I was judge of all their disputes, and my decisions always submitted to. While I staid, there was neither gaming, drinking, quarrelling, or keeping. The Abbé Grant (a very honest good-natured North Briton, who has resided several years at Rome) was so much amazed at this uncommon regularity, he would have made me believe I was bound in conscience to pass my life there, for the good of my countrymen. I can assure you my vanity was not at all raised by this influence over them, knowing very well that had Lady Charlotte de Roussi been in my place, it would have been the same thing. There is that general emulation in mankind, I am fully persuaded if a dozen young fellows bred a bear amongst them, and saw no other creature, they would every day fall out for the bear's favours, and be extremely flattered by any mark of distinction shown by that ugly animal. Since my last return to Italy, which is now near seven years, I have lived in a solitude not unlike that of Robinson Crusoe, excepting my short trips to Louvere : my whole time is spent in my closet and garden, without regretting any conversation but that of my own family. The study of simples is a new amusement to me. I have no correspondence with any body at London but yourself and your father, whom I have not heard from a long time. My best wishes attend you and yours, being with greath truth,

Your most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Brescia, June 22, N. S. 1753.

WHEN I wrote to you last, my dear child, I told you I had a great cold, which ended in a very bad fever, that contiuued a fortnight without intermission, and you may imagine has brought me very low. I have not yet left my chamber. My first care is to thank you for yours of May 8.

I have not yet lost all my interest in this country by the death of the Doge, having another very considerable friend, though I cannot expect to keep him long, he being near fourscore. I mean the Cardinal Querini, who is archbishop of this diocese, and consequently of great power, there being not one family,

high or low, in this province, that has not some ecclesiastic in it, and therefore all of them have some dependence on him. He is of one of the first families of Venice, vastly rich of himself, and has many great benefices beside his archbishoprick; but these advantages are little in his eyes, in comparison of being the first author (as he fancies) at this day in Christendom; and indeed, if the merit of books consisted in bulk and number, he might very justly claim that character. I believe he has published, yearly, several volumes for above fifty years, beside corresponding with all the literati of Europe, and among these, several of the senior fellows at Oxford, and some members of the Royal Society, that neither you nor I have ever heard of, whom he is persuaded are the most eminent men in England. He is at present employed in writing his own life, of which he has already printed the first tome; and, if he goes on in the same style, it will be a most voluminous performance. He begins from the moment of his birth, and tells us that, on that day, he made such extraordinary faces, the midwife, chambermaids, and nurses all agreed that there was born a shining light in church and state. You 'll think me very merry with the failings of my friend. I confess I ought to forgive a vanity to which I am obliged for many good offices, since I do not doubt it is owing to that, that he professes himself so highly attached to my service having an opinion that my suffrage is of great weight in the learned world, and that I shall not fail to spread his fame, at least, all over Great Britain. He sent me a present last week of a very uncommon kind, even his own picture, extremely well done, but so flattering, that it is a young old man, with a most pompous inscription under it. I suppose he intended it for the ornament of my library, not knowing it is only a closet: however, these distinctions he shows me, give me a figure in this town, where every body has something to hope from him; and it was certainly in a view to that they would have complimented me with a statue, for I would not have you mistake so far as to imagine there is any set of people more grateful or generous than another. Mankind is every where the same: like cherries or apples, they may differ in size, shape, or colour, from different soils, climates, or culture, but are still essentially the same species; and the little black wood cherry is not nearer akin to the maydukes that are served at great tables, than the wild, naked negro, to the fine figures adorned with coronets and ribbands. This observation might be carried yet farther: all animals are stimulated by the same passions, and act very nearly alike, as far as we are capable of observing them.

The conclusion of your letter has touched me very much. I sympathise with you, my dear child, in all the concern you express for your family: you may remember I represented it to you, before you were married; but that is one of the sentiments it is impossible to comprehend till it is felt. A mother only knows a mother's fondness. Indeed the pain so overbalances the pleasure, that I believe, if it could be thoroughly understood, there would be no mothers at all. However, take care that the anxiety for the future does not take from you the comforts you may enjoy in the present hour: it is all that is properly ours; and yet such is the weakness of humanity, we commonly lose what is, either by regretting the past, or disturbing our minds with fear of what may be. You have many blessings; a husband you love, and who behaves well to you, agreeable hopeful children, a handsome convenient house, with pleasant gardens, in a good air and fine situation, which I place among the most solid satisfactions of life. The truest wisdom is that which diminishes to us what is displeasing, and turns our thoughts to the advantages which we possess. I can assure you I give no precepts I do not daily practise. How often do I fancy to myself the pleasure I should take in seeing you in the midst of the little people; and how severe do I then think my destiny, that denies me that happiness! I endeavour to comfort myself by reflecting, that we should certainly have perpetual disputes (if not quarrels) concerning the management of them; the affection of a grandmother has generally a tincture of dotage: you would say I spoilt them, and perhaps not be much in the wrong. Speaking of them calls to my remembrance the token I have so long promised my goddaughter: I am really ashamed of it: I would have sent it by Mr. Anderson, if he had been going immediately to London; but as he proposed a long tour, I durst not press it upon him. It is not easy to find any one who will take the charge of a jewel for a long journey; it may be, the value of it in money to choose something for herself, would be as acceptable: if so, I will send you a note upon Child. Ceremony should be banished between us. I beg you would speak freely upon that, and all other occasions, to Your most affectionate mother,

M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, July 10, N. S. 1753.

DEAR CHILD, —I received yours of May the 12th but yesterday, July the 9th. I am surprised you complain of my silence. I have never failed answering yours the post after I

received them; but I fear, being directed to Twickenham (having no other direction from you), your servants there may have neglected them.

I have been these six weeks, and still am, at my dairy-house, which joins to my garden. I believe I have already told you it is a long mile from the castle, which is situate in the midst of a very large village, once a considerable town, part of the walls still remaining, and has not vacant ground enough about it to make a garden, which is my greatest amusement, it being now troublesome to walk, or even go in the chaise till the evening. I have fitted up in this farm-house a room for myself, that is to say, strewed the floor with rushes, covered the chimney with moss and branches, and adorned the room with basons of earthen ware (which is made here to great perfection) filled with flowers, and put in some straw chairs, and a couch bed, which is my whole furniture. This spot of ground is so beautiful, I am afraid you will scarce credit the description, which, however, I can assure you, shall be very literal, without any embellishment from imagination. It is on a bank, forming a kind of peninsula, raised from the river Oglio fifty feet, to which you may descend by easy stairs cut in the turf, and either take the air on the river, which is as large as the Thames at Richmond, or by walking an avenue two hundred yards on the side of it, you find a wood of a hundred acres, which was all ready cut into walks and ridings when I took it. I have only added fifteen bowers in different views, with seats of turf. They were easily made, here being a large quantity of underwood, and a great number of wild vines, which twist to the top of the highest trees, and from which they make a very good sort of wine they call *brusco*. I am now writing to you in one of these arbours, which is so thick shaded, the sun is not troublesome, even at noon. Another is on the side of the river, where I have made a camp kitchen, that I may take the fish, dress, and eat it immediately, and at the same time see the barks, which ascend or descend every day to or from Mantua, Guastalla, or Pont de Vie, all considerable towns. This little wood is carpetted, in their succeeding seasons, with violets and strawberries, inhabited by a nation of nightingales, and filled with game of all kinds, excepting deer and wild boar, the first being unknown here, and not being large enough for the other.

My garden was a plain vineyard when it came into my hands not two years ago, and it is, with a small expense, turned into a garden that (apart from the advantage of the climate) I like better than that of Kensington. The Italian vineyards are not plant-

ed like those in France, but in clumps, fastened to trees planted in equal ranks (commonly fruit trees), and continued in festoons from one to another, which I have turned into covered galleries of shade, that I can walk in the heat without being incommoded by it. I have made a dining room of verdure, capable of holding a table of twenty covers; the whole ground is three hundred and seventeen feet in length, and two hundred in breadth. You see it is far from large; but so prettily disposed (though I say it), that I never saw a more agreeable rustic garden, abounding with all sorts of fruit, and producing a variety of wines. I would send you a pipe, if I did not fear the customs would make you pay too dear for it. I believe my description gives you but an imperfect idea of my garden. Perhaps I shall succeed better in describing my manner of life, which is as regular as that of any monastery. I generally rise at six, and as soon as I have breakfasted, put myself at the head of my needle-women and work with them till nine. I then inspect my dairy, and take a turn among my poultry, which is a very large enquiry. I have, at present, two hundred chickens, besides turkies, geese, ducks, and peacocks. All things have hitherto prospered under my care; my bees and silk-worms are doubled, and I am told that, without accidents, my capital will be so in two years' time. At eleven o'clock I retire to my books, I dare not indulge myself in that pleasure above an hour. At twelve I constantly dine, and sleep after dinner till about three. I then send for some of my old priests, and either play at piquet or whist, till 't is cool enough to go out. One evening I walk in my wood, where I often sup, take the air on horseback the next, and go on the water the third. The fishery of this part of the river belongs to me; and my fisherman's little boat (to which I have a green lutestring awning) serves me for a barge. He and his son are my rowers without any expense, he being very well paid by the profit of the fish, which I give him on condition of having every day one dish for my table. Here is plenty of every sort of fresh water fish (excepting salmon); but we have a large trout so like it, that I who have almost forgot the taste, do not distinguish it.

We are both placed properly in regard to our different times of life: you amidst the fair, the gallant, and the gay; I, in a retreat, where I enjoy every amusement that solitude can afford. I confess I sometimes wish for a little conversation; but I reflect that the commerce of the world gives more uneasiness than pleasure, and quiet is all the hope that can reasonably be indulged at my age. My letter is of an unconscionable length; I should ask your pardon for it, but I had a

mind to give you an idea of my mode of passing my time,—take it as an instance of the affection of, dear child,

Your most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, July 23, N. S. 1753.

MY DEAR CHILD,—I have just received two letters from you, though the dates are a month distant. The death of Lady Carolina (1) naturally raises the mortifying reflection, on how slender a thread hangs all worldly prosperity! I cannot say I I am otherwise much touched at it. It is true she was my sister, as it were, and in some sense; but her behaviour to me never gave me any love, nor her general conduct any esteem. The confounding of all ranks, and making a jest of order, has long been growing in England; and I perceive by the books you sent me, has made a very considerable progress. The heroes and heroines of the age are cobblers and kitchen wenches. Perhaps you will say, I should not take my ideas of the manners of the times from such trifling authors; but it is more truly to be found among them, than from any historian: as they write merely to get money, they always fall into the notions that are most acceptable to the present taste. It has long been the endeavour of our English writers, to represent people of quality as the vilest and silliest part of the nation, being (generally) very low born themselves. I am not surprised at their propagating this doctrine; but I am much mistaken if this levelling principle does not, one day or other, break out in fatal consequences to the public, as it has already done in many private families. You will think I am influenced by living under an aristocratic government, where distinction of rank is carried to a very great height; but I can assure you, my opinion is founded on reflection and experience, and I wish to God I had always thought in the same manner: though I had ever the utmost contempt for misalliances; yet the silly prejudices of my education had taught me to believe that I was to treat nobody as an inferior, and that poverty was a degree of merit: this imaginary humility has made me admit many familiar acquaintances, of which I have heartily repented every one, and the greatest examples I have known of honour and integrity have been among those of the highest birth and for-

(1) Lady Carolina Pierrepoint married to Thomas Brand, Esq. of the Hoo in Hertfordshire, grandfather of the present Lord Dacre. Vide Lord Orford's letters to Sir H. Mann, June 5,1754.

tunes. There are many reasons why it should be so, which I will not trouble you with. If my letter was to be puhlished, I know I should be railed at for pride, and called an enemy of the poor; but I take a pleasure in telling you my real thoughts. I would willingly establish the most intimate friendship between us, and I am sure no proof of it shall ever be wanting on my side. I am sorry for the untimely death of poor Lord C——ry; (1) he had certainly a very good heart: I have often thought it great pity it was not under the direction of a better head. I had lost his favour some time before I left England on a pleasant account. He came to me one morning with a hat full of paper, which he desired me to peruse, and tell him my sincere opinion: I trembled at the proposition, foreseeing the inevitable consequence of this confidence. However, I was not so barbarous as to tell him that his verses were extremely stupid (as God knows they were), and that he was no more inspired with the spirit of poetry, than that of prophecy. I contented myself with representing to him, in the mildest terms, that it was not the business of a man of quality to turn author, and that he should confine himself to the applause of his friends, and by no means venture on the press. He seemed to take this advice with good humour, promised to follow it, and we parted without any dispute; but alas! he could not help showing his performance to better judges, who, with their usual candour and good nature, earnestly exhorted him to oblige the world with this instructive piece, which was soon after published, and had the success I expected from it. Pope persuaded him, poor soul! that my declaiming against it occasioned the ill reception it met with, though this is the first time I ever mentioned it in my life, and I did not so much as guess the reason I heard of him no more, till a few days before I left London. I accidentally said to one of his acquaintance, that his visits to me were at an and, I knew not why; and I was let into this weighty secret. My journey prevented all explanation between us, and perhaps I should not have thought it worth any, if I had staid. I am not surprised he has left nothing to the Duchess of Queensbury, (2) knowing he had no value for her, though I never heard him name her: but he was of that species of mankind, who, without designing it, discover all they think to any observer that converses with them. His desire of fixing his name to a certain quantity of wall, is one instance, among thousands, of the passion men have for perpetuating their memory: this weakness (I call every sentiment

(1) Cornbury. (2) She was Lord Cornbury's sister.

so that cannot be defended by reason) is so universal, it may be looked on as instinct; and as no instinct is implanted but to some purpose, I could almost incline to an opinion, which was professed by several of the fathers, and adopted by some of the best French divines, that the punishment of the next life consists not only in the continuance, but the redoubling our attachment for this, in a more intense manner than we can now have any notion of. These reflections would carry me very far: for your comfort my paper is at an end, and I have scarce room to tell you a truth which admits of no doubt, that I am

Your most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, Dairy-house, July 26, N. S. 1753.

I AM really as fond of my garden as a young author of his first play, when it has been well received by the town, and can no more forbear teasing my acquaintance for their approbation: though I gave you a long account of it lately, I must tell you, that I have made two little terraces, raised twelve steps each, at the end of my great walk; they are just finished, and a great addition to the beauty of my garden. I enclose you a rough draught of it, drawn (or more properly scrawled) by my own hand, without the assistance of rule or compasses, as you will easily perceive. I have mixed in my espaliers as many rose and jessamin trees as I can cram in; and in the squares designed for the use of the kitchen, have avoided putting any thing disagreeable either to sight or smell, having another garden below for cabbage, onions, garlick. All the walks are garnished with beds of flowers, beside the parterres, which are for a more distinguished sort. I have neither brick nor stone walls: all my fence is a high hedge, mingled with trees; but fruit is so plenty in this country, nobody thinks it worth stealing. Gardening is certainly the next amusement to reading; and as my sight will now permit me little of that, I am glad to form a taste that can give me so much employment, and be the plaything of my age, now my pen and needle are almost useless to me.

I am very glad you are admitted into the conversation of the Prince (1) and Princess: it is a favour that you ought to cultivate for the good of the family, which is now numerous, and it many one day be of great advantage. I think Lord Bute much in the right to endeavour the continuance of it; and it would be imprudent in you to neglect what may be of great use to your

(1) Frederick Prince of Wales, father of George III.

children. I pray God bless both you and them: it is the daily prayer of your most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY M.

Now the sea is open, we may send packets to one another. I wish you would send me Campbell's book of prints of the English houses, (1) and that Lord Bute would be so good to choose me the best book of practical gardening extant.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, Sept. 10, O. S. 1753.

DEAR CHILD,—I am much obliged to your father for showing you my letter, being persuaded he meant kindly to me, though it was not wrote with the intention of being shown; it is not the first time I have made him the same declaration of my opinion of Lord Bute's character, which has ever been my sentiments; and had I thought differently I would never have given my consent to your marriage, notwithstanding your inclination; to which, however, I thought it just to pay a great regard. I have seldom been mistaken in my first judgment of those I thought it worth while to consider; and when (which has happened too often) flattery or the persuasion of others has made me alter it, time has never failed to show me I had done better to have remained fixed in my first (which is ever the most unprejudiced) idea. My health is so often disordered, that I begin to be as weary of it as mending old lace; when it is patched in one place it breaks in another. I can expect nothing better at my time of life, and will not trouble you with talking any more about it.

If the new servant of the Princess is the Miss Pitt (2) I know, I am sorry for it. I am afraid I know her very well; and yet I fancy 'tis a younger sister since you call her Anne, and I think the name of my acquaintance was Mary; she, I mean, left France a short time before I went thither. I have some curiosity to know how pious Lady Ferrers (3) behaves to her new daughter-in-law. My letter is cut short by company; they wait while I tell you I am always

Your most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

(1) Vitruvius Britannicus.

(2) Miss Anne Pitt, sister of the first Lord Chatham, whom she strikingly resembled in features and in ability. She was a particular friend of Lady Bute's; but their intimacy had scarcely begun when she obtained the place of Privy Purse to the Princess Dowager of Wales.

(3) Anne, fourth daughter of Sir Walter Clarges; her son Laurence, fourth Earl Ferrers, married, 1752, Mary, youngest daughter of Amos Meredith, Esq. of Henbury in Cheshire.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to the little ones, who, I hope, are recovered by this time of their distemper.

I recollect myself, I was mistaken in Mrs. Pitt's name, it is Anne; she has wit, but—

TO MR. WORTLEY.

Louvere, Oct. 10, N. S. 1753.

I THINK I now know why our correspondence is so miserably interrupted, and so many of my letters lost to and from England; but I am no happier in the discovery than a man that has found out his complaints proceed from a stone in the kidneys: I know the cause, but am entirely ignorant of the remedy, and must suffer my uneasiness with what patience I can.

An old priest made me a visit as I was folding my last packet to my daughter. Observing it to be large, he told me I had done a great deal of business that morning. I made answer, I had done no business at all; I had only wrote to my daughter on family affairs, or such trifles as make up women's conversation. He said gravely, people like your Excellenza do not use to write long letters upon trifles. I assured him, that if he understood English, I would let him read my letter. He replied, with a mysterious smile, if I did understand English, I should not understand what you have written, except you would give me the key, which I durst not presume to ask. What key? (said I staring) there is not one cypher beside the date. He answered, cyphers were only used by novices in politics, and it was very easy to write intelligibly, under feigned names of persons and places, to a correspondent, in such a manner as should be almost impossible to be understood by any body else.

Thus I suppose my innocent epistles are severely scrutinised: and when I talk of my grand-children, they are fancied to represent all the potentates of Europe. This is very provoking. I confess there are good reasons for extraordinary caution at this juncture; but 'tis very hard I cannot pass for being as insignificant as I really am.

The house at Acton was certainly left to Lady Carolina; (1) and whatever Lady Anne left, is so little (when divided into five parts), it is not worth inquiring for, especially after so long silence. I heartily congratulate you on the recovery of your sight. It is a blessing I prefer to life, and will seek for glasses whenever I am in a place where they are sold.

(1) The daughters of Evelyn Duke of Kingston, by Lady Isabella Bentinck, his second wife. Lady Carolina Pierrepont married Thomas Brand, Esq. and died June 9, 1753. Lady Anne died in 1739, unmarried.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, Nov. 27, N. S. 1753.

DEAR CHILD,—By the account you give me of London, I think it very much reformed; at least you have one sin the less, and it was a very reigning one in my time, I mean scandal: it must be literally reduced to a whisper, since the custom of living all together. I hope it has also banished the fashion of talking all at once, which was very prevailing when I was in town, and may perhaps contribute to brotherly love and unity, which was so much declined in my memory, that it was hard to invite six people that would not, by cold looks, or piquing reflections, affront one another. I suppose parties are at an end, though I fear it is the consequence of the old almanack prophecy, "Poverty brings peace;" and I fancy you really follow the French mode, and the lady keeps an assembly, that the assembly may keep the lady, and card money pay for clothes and equipage, as well as cards and candles. I find I should be as solitary in London as I am here in the country, it being impossible for me to submit to live in a *drum*, which I think so far from a cure of uneasinesses, that it is, in my opinion, adding one more to the heap. There are so many attached to humanity, 'tis impossible to fly from them all; but experience has confirmed to me (what I always thought), that the pursuit of pleasure will be ever attended with pain, and the study of ease be most certainly accompanied with pleasures. I have had this morning as much delight in a walk in the sun as ever I felt formerly in the crowded mall, even when I imagined I had my share of the admiration of the place, which was generally soured, before I slept, by the informations of my female friends, who seldom failed to tell me, it was observed that I had showed an inch above my shoe-heels, or some other criticism of equal weight, which was construed affectation, and utterly destroyed all the satisfaction *my* vanity had given me. I have now no other but in my little housewifery, which is easily gratified in this country, where, by the help of my receipt book, I make a very shining figure among my neighbours, by the introduction of custards, cheesecakes, and minced pies, which were entirely unknown to these parts, and are received with universal applause, and I have reason to believe will preserve my memory even to future ages, particularly by the art of butter-making, in which I have so improved them, that they now make as good as in any part of England.

My paper is at an end, which I do not doubt you are glad of. I have hardly room for my compliments to Lord Bute, bless-

ing to my grand-children, and to assure you that I am ever

Your most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, Dec. 13, 1753.

DEAR CHILD,—I have wrote you so many letters without any return, that if I loved you at all less than I do, I should certainly give over writing. I received a kind letter last post from Lady Oxford, which gives me hopes I shall at length receive yours, being persuaded you have not neglected our correspondence, though I am not so happy to have the pleasure of it.

I have little to say from this solitude, having already sent you a description of my garden, which, with my books, takes up all my time. I made a small excursion last week to visit a nunnery, twelve miles from hence, which is the only institution of the kind in all Italy. It is in a town in the State of Mantua, founded by a princess of the house of Gonzaga, one of whom (now very old) is the present abbess: they are dressed in black, and wear a thin cypress veil at the back of their heads, excepting which, they have no mark of a religious habit, being set out in their hair, and having no guimpe, but wearing *des collets montez*, for which I have no name in English, but you may have seen them in very old pictures, being in fashion both before and after ruffs. Their house is a very large handsome building, though not regular, every sister having liberty to build her own apartment to her taste, which consists of as many rooms as she pleases: they have each a separate kitchen, and keep cooks and what other servants they think proper, though there is a very fine public refectory: they are permitted to dine in private whenever they please. Their garden is very large, and the most adorned of any in these parts. They have no grates, and make what visits they will, always two together, and receive those of the men as well as ladies. I was accompanied when I went with all the nobility of the town, and they showed me all the house, without excluding the gentlemen; but what I think the most remarkable privilege is a country house, which belongs to them, three miles from the town, where they pass every vintage, and at any time any four of them may take their pleasure there, for as many days as they choose. They seem to differ from the *chanoinesse* of Flanders only in their vow of celibacy. They take pensioners, but only those of quality. I saw here a niece of General Brown. Those that profess, are obliged to prove a descent

as noble as the knights of Malta. Upon the whole, I think it the most agreeable community I have seen, and their behaviour more decent than that of the cloistered nuns, who I have heard say themselves, that the grate permits all liberty of speech since it leaves them no other, and indeed, they generally talk as if they thought so. I went to a monastery, which gave me occasion to know a great deal of their conduct, which (though the convent of the best reputation in that town where it is) was such, as I would as soon put a girl into the play-house for education, as send her among them.

My paper is at an end, and hardly leaves room for my compliments to Lord Bute, blessing to my grand-children, and assurance to yourself of being your most affectionate mother,

M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, April 28, 1754.

DEAR CHILD,—I am quite sick with vexation at the interruption of our correspondence. I have sent six letters since the date of the last which you say you have received; and three addressed to my sister, Lady Mar, none of which, you say, are arrived. You have had no loss further than in testimonies of my real affection; my long stories of what happens here can be but of little entertainment to you; but every thing from England is interesting to me, who live the life, as I have already told you, of Robinson Crusoe, whose goats and kids were as much his companions as any of the people I see here. My time is wholly dedicated to the care of a decaying body, and endeavouring, as the old song says, "to grow wiser and better as my strength wears away." I imagine the Duke of Newcastle (1) will soon have the treasurer's staff; the title of first commissioner is not equal to his importance. You do not tell me how Mr. Pelham (2) has disposed of his affairs, and you should be particular in your relations. I am as ignorant of every thing that passes in London, as if I inhabited the deserts of Africa. My health is so often disordered, that I begin to be as weary of mending it as mending old lace, which, when it is patched in one place, breaks out in another. I am very glad of Lord Mountstuart's (3) recovery, and pity very much the pain you have suffered during his danger. It would have been terrible

(1) Appointed first Lord of the Treasury in March 1754.

(2) Henry Pelham, Esq. died March 6, 1754. He had been appointed first Lord of the Treasury in November 1743. He succeeded Samuel Lord Sandys.

(3) First Marquis of Bute.

to have lost so agreeable a child. I dare not advise you to moderate your tenderness, finding it impossible to overcome my own, notwithstanding my melancholy experience. This letter is incomparably dull. I cannot resolve to own it by setting my name to it.

My compliments to Lord B. God bless you and yours.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, May 7, N.S. 1754.

DEAR CHILD,—I have already wished you joy of your new daughter, and wrote to Lord Bute to thank him for his letter. I don't know whether I shall make my court to you in saying it, but I own I cannot help thinking that your family is numerous enough, and that the education and disposal of four girls is employment for a whole life. I remain in a retirement, where my amusements are confined to my garden and dairy: however, I should be glad to know, now and then, what is doing among my acquaintance at London, and beg you would enquire of the price raw silk bears. I have asked this question very often, but suppose my letters miscarried, having never had any answer. Your father has been so obliging to promise me some ale; if you would send, at the same time, Colin Campbell's books of Architecture, consigned to Signior Isaac M. de Treves, they would come safe to me. I imagine the Duke of Kingston is now building. I was told he intended it on the same ground where the last house stood, which I think an ill fancy, being the lowest part of the park, and he might choose others with a prospect more agreeable, which is, in my opinion, the first thing to be considered in a country seat. I have given you a large description of that of my dairy house, which is the most beautiful of any in this province; if I knew it was lost, I would repeat it.

This letter is so dull I am ashamed to set my name to it.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

13th May, 1754.

IT was with great pleasure I received my dear child's letter of April 15, this day, May 13. Do not imagine that I have had hard thoughts of you when I lamented your silence; I think I know your good heart too well to suspect you of any unkindness to me; in your circumstances many unavoidable accidents may hinder your writing, but having not heard from you for many months, my fears for your health made me very uneasy. I am

surprised I am not oftener low-spirited, considering the vexations I am exposed to by the folly of Murray; I suppose he attributes to me some of the marks of contempt he is treated with; without remembering that he was in no higher esteem before I came. I confess I have received great civilities from some friends that I made here so long ago as the year 40, but upon my honour have never named his name, or heard him mentioned by any noble Venetian whatever; nor have in any shape given him the least provocation to all the low malice he has shown me, which I have overlooked as below my notice, and would not trouble you with any part of it at present if he had not invented a new persecution which may be productive of ill consequences. Here arrived, a few days ago, Sir James Stuart with his lady; that name was sufficient to make me fly to wait on her. I was charmed to find a man of uncommon sense and learning, and a lady that without beauty is more amiable than the fairest of her sex. I offered them all the little good offices in my power, and invited them to supper; upon which our wise minister has discovered that I am in the interest of popery and slavery. As he has often said the same thing of Mr. Pitt, it would give me no mortification, if I did not apprehend that his fertile imagination may support this wise idea by such circumstances as may influence those that do not know me. It is very remarkable that, after having suffered all the rage of that party at Avignon, for my attachment to the present reigning family, I should be accused here of favouring rebellion, when I hoped all our odious divisions were forgotten.

I return you many thanks, my dear child, for your kind intention of sending me another set of books. I am still in your debt nine shillings, and send you enclosed a note on Child to pay for whatever you buy; but no more duplicates; as well as I love nonsense, I do not desire to have it twice over in the same words; no translations; no periodical papers; tho', I confess some of the World entertained me very much, particularly Lord Chesterfield and Harry Walpole, whom I knew at Florence; but whenever I met Dodsley I wished him out of the World with all my heart. The title was a very lucky one, being as you see productive of puns world without end; which is all the species of wit some people can either practise or understand. I beg you would direct the next box to me, without passing thro' the hands of Smith; (1) he makes so much

(1) Joseph Smith, Esq, Consul at Venice. He made a large collection of paintings and gems, which were purchased by King George the Third for 20,000l. The Dactyliotheca Smithiana, in two vols. quarto, was published in 1765.

merit of giving himself the trouble of asking for it that I am quite weary of him; beside that he imposes upon me in every thing. He has lately married (1) Murray's sister, a beauteous virgin of forty, who after having refused all the peers in England, because the nicety of her conscience would not permit her to give her hand when her heart was untouched, she remained without a husband till the charms of that fine gentleman Mr. Smith, who is only eighty-two, determined her to change her condition. In short, they are (as Lord Orrery says of Swift and company) an illustrious group, but with that I have nothing to do. I should be sorry to ruin any body, or offend a man of such strict honor as Lord Holderness, who, like a great politician, has provided for a worthless relation without any expense. It has long been a maxim not to consider if a man is fit for a place, but if the place is fit for him, and we see the fruit of these Machiavellian proceedings. All I desire is, that Mr. Pitt would require of this noble minister to behave civilly to me, the contrary conduct being very disagreeable. I will talk farther on this subject in another letter, if this arrives safely. Let me have an answer as soon as possible, and think of me as your most affectionate mother. M. WORTLEY.

My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessing to all yours, who are very near my heart.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, May 27, N. S. 1754.

DEAR CHILD,—I had the pleasure of your letter two days ago, in which you tell me of the marriage of Mr. Mackenzie,(2) which I was extremely glad to hear, wishing him happiness, who I think so well deserves it, from an uncommon share of honour and good-nature, of which even his indiscretions are proofs. The Duchess of Argyle has acted, in my opinion, with equal generosity and prudence: her ill success in the disposal of Lady—, has shown her the mistake of interested matches, which are generally unfortunate. This spring has been very melancholy to me, having been tormented with a quotidian ague, of which I am scarcely recovered; and my woman, who is the most necessary servant in my family, still afflicted with a tertian, which puts my whole house in disorder, and hinders my

(1) Mr. Murray was afterwards ambassador at the Porte, and died in the Lazaretto at Venice in 1777, upon his return to England.

(2) James Stuart Mackenzie, only brother of John Earl of Bute, married Lady Betty Campbell, second daughter of John Duke of Argyll. He died in 1798.

removal to my dairy, to my great mortification, now the heats are begun. If my garden and my house stood together, I would not change this seat for Lord Tilney's or the Marquis of Rockingham's; but alas! they are some miles asunder.

Your new fashioned game of brag was the genteel amusement when I was a girl; crimp succeeded to that, and basset and hazard employed the town, when I left it to go to Constantinople. At my return I found them all at commerce, which gave place to quadrille, and that to whist; but the rage of play has been ever the same, and will ever be so among the idle of both sexes. It is the same in every great town, and I think more particularly all over France. Here is a young man of quality, one mile from hence, just of age, who lost last carnival, at Brescia, ten thousand pounds, being all the money his guardians had laid up in his minority; and, as his estate is entailed, he cannot raise one farthing on it, and is now a sort of prisoner in his castle, where he lives upon rapine, I mean running in debt to poor people, who perhaps he will never be able to pay. I am afraid you are tired with this insignificant letter; we old women love tattling; you must forgive the infirmities of your most affectionate mother,

M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, June 23, 1754.

MY DEAR CHILD,—I have promised you some remarks on all the books I have received. I believe you would easily forgive my not keeping my word; however, I shall go on. The Rambler is certainly a strong misnomer; he always plods in the beaten road of his predecessors, following the Spectator (with the same pace a pack-horse would do a hunter) in the style that is proper to lengthen a paper. These writers may, perhaps, be of service to the public, which is saying a great deal in their favour. There are numbers of both sexes who never read anything but such productions, and cannot spare time, from doing nothing, to go through a sixpenny pamphlet. Such gentle readers may be improved by a moral hint, which, though repeated over and over, from generation to generation, they never heard in their lives. I should be glad to know the name of this laborious author. H. Fielding has given a true picture of himself and his first wife, in the characters of Mr. and Mrs. Booth, some compliments to his own figure excepted; and, I am persuaded, several of the incidents he mentions are real matters of fact. I wonder he does not perceive Tom Jones and Mr. Booth are sorry scoundrels. All this sort of books have the

same fault, which I cannot easily pardon, being very mischievous. They place a merit in extravagant passions, and encourage young people to hope for impossible events, to draw them out of the misery they choose to plunge themselves into, expecting legacies from unknown relations, and generous benefactors to distressed virtue, as much out of nature as fairy treasures. Fielding has really a fund of true humour, and was to be pitied at his first entrance into the world, having no choice, as he said himself, but to be a hackney writer, or a hackney coachman. His genius deserved a better fate; but I cannot help blaming that continued indiscretion, to give it the softest name, that has run through his life, and I am afraid still remains. I guessed R. Random to be his, though without his name. I cannot think Ferdinand Fathom wrote by the same hand, it is every way so much below it. Sally Fielding has mended her style in her last volume of David Simple, which conveys a useful moral, though she does not seem to have intended it: I mean, shows the ill consequences of not providing against casual losses, which happen to almost every body. Mr. Orgueil's character is well drawn, and is frequently to be met with. The Art of Tormenting, the Female Quixote, and Sir C. Goodville, are all sale work. I suppose they proceed from her pen, and I heartily pity her, constrained by her circumstances to seek her bread by a method, I do not doubt, she despises. Tell me who is that accomplished countess she celebrates. I left no such person in London; nor can I imagine who is meant by the English Sappho mentioned in Betsy Thoughtless, whose adventures, and those of Jemmy Jessamy, gave me some amusement. I was better entertained by the valet, who very fairly represents, how you are bought and sold by your servants. I am now so accustomed to another manner of treatment, it would be difficult to me to suffer them: his adventures have the uncommon merit of ending in a surprising manner. The general want of invention, which reigns among our writers, inclines me to think it is not the natural growth of our island, which has not sun enough to warm the imagination. The press is loaded by the servile flock of imitators. Lord Bolingbroke would have quoted Horace in this place. Since I was born, no original has appeared excepting Congreve, and Fielding, who would, I believe, have approached nearer to his excellencies, if not forced, by necessity, to publish without correction, and throw many productions into the world he would have thrown into the fire, if meat could have been got without money, or money without scribbling. The greatest virtue, justice, and the most distinguishing prerogative of

mankind, writing, when duly executed, do honour to human nature; but when degenerated into trades, are the most contemptible ways of getting bread. I am sorry not to see any more of Peregrine Pickle's performances; I wish you would tell me his name.

I can't forbear saying something in relation to my granddaughters, who are very near my heart. If any of them are fond of reading, I would not advise you to hinder them (chiefly because it is impossible) seeing poetry, plays, or romances; but accustom them to talk over what they read, and point out to them, as you are very capable of doing, the absurdity often concealed under fine expressions, where the sound is apt to engage the admiration of young people. I was so much charmed, at fourteen, with the dialogue of Henry and Emma, I can say it by heart to this day, without reflecting on the monstrous folly of the story in plain prose, where a young heiress to a fond father is represented falling in love with a fellow she had only seen as a huntsman, a falconer, and a beggar, and who confesses, without any circumstances of excuse, that he is obliged to run his contry, having newly committed a murder. She ought reasonably to have supposed him, at best, a highwayman; yet the virtuous virgin resolves to run away with him, to live among the banditti, and wait upon his trollop, if she had no other way of enjoying his company. This senseless tale is, however, so well varnished with melody of words, and pomp of sentiments, I am convinced it has hurt more girls than ever were injured by the worst poems extant.

I fear this counsel has been repeated to you before; but I have lost so many letters designed for you, I know not which you have received. If you would have me avoid this fault, you must take notice of those that arrive, which you very seldom do. My dear child, God bless you and yours. I am ever your most affectionate mother,

M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, July 24, 1754.

IT is always a great pleasure to me, my dear child, to hear of your health, and that of your family. This year has been fatal to the literati of Italy. The Marquis Maffei soon followed Cardinal Querini. He was in England when you were married. Perhaps you may remember his coming to see your father's Greek inscription: (1) he was then an old man, and conse-

(1) Presented by Mr. Wortley to Trinity College, Cambridge.

quently now a great age; but preserved his memory and senses in their first vigour. After having made the tour of Europe in the search of antiquities, he fixed his residence in his native town of Verona, where he erected himself a little empire, from the general esteem, and a conversation (so they call an assembly), which he established in his palace, which is one of the largest in that place, and so luckily situated, that it is between the theatre and the ancient amphitheatre. He made piazzas leading to each of them, filled with shops, where were sold coffee, tea, chocolate, all sorts of sweetmeats, and in the midst, a court well kept, and sanded, for the use of those young gentlemen who would exercise their managed horses, or show their mistresses their skill in riding. His gallery was open every evening at five o'clock, where he had a fine collection of antiquities, and two large cabinets of medals, intaglios, and cameos, arranged in exact order. His library joined to it; and on the other side a suit of five rooms, the first of which was destined to dancing, the second to cards (but all games of hazard excluded), and the others (where he himself presided in an easy chair) sacred to conversation, which always turned upon some point of learning, either historical or poetical. Controversy and politics being utterly prohibited, he generally proposed the subject, and took great delight in instructing the young people, who were obliged to seek the medal, or explain the inscription, that illustrated any fact they discoursed of. Those who chose the diversion of the public walks, or theatre, went thither, but never failed returning to give an account of the drama, which produced a critical dissertation on that subject, the Marquis having given shining proofs of his skill in that art. His tragedy of Merope, which is much injured by Voltaire's translation, being esteemed a master-piece; and his comedy of the Ceremonies, being a just ridicule of those formal fopperies, it has gone a great way in helping to banish them out of Italy. The walkers contributed to the entertainment by an account of some herb, or flower, which led the way to a botanical conversation; or, if they were such inaccurate observers as to have nothing of that kind to offer, they repeated some pastoral description. One day in the week was set apart for music, vocal and instrumental, but no mercenaries were admitted to the concert. Thus, at very little expense (his fortune not permitting a large one), he had the happiness of giving his countrymen a taste of polite pleasure, and showing the youth how to pass their time agreeably without debauchery; and (if I durst say it) in so doing, has been a greater benefactor to his country than the Cardinal, with all his magnificent foundations,

and voluminous writings, to support superstition, and create disputes on things, for the most part, in their own nature indifferent. The Veronese nobility, having no road open to advancement, are not tormented with ambition, or its child, faction; and having learned to make the best of the health and fortune allotted them, terminate all their views in elegant pleasure. They say, God has reserved glory to himself, and permitted pleasure to the pursuit of man. In the autumn, which is here the pleasantest season of the year, a band of about thirty join their hunting equipages, and, carrying with them a portable theatre and a set of music, make a progress in the neighbouring provinces, where they hunt every morning, perform an opera every Sunday, and other plays the rest of the week, to the entertainment of all the neighbourhood. I have had many honourable invitations from my old friend Maffei(1) to make one of this society; but some accident or other has always prevented me. You that are accustomed to hear of deep political schemes and wise harangues, will despise, perhaps, this trifling life. I look upon them in another light; as a sect of rational philosophers,—

> Who sing and dance, and laugh away their time,
> Fresh as their groves, and happy as their clime.

My paper is out.

M. W. M.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, Sept. 20, 1754.

My dear Child,—I am extremely delighted by your last letter. Your pleasure in your daughter's company is exactly what I have felt in yours, and recalls to me many tender ideas, perhaps better forgot. You observe very justly, that my affection, which was confined to one, must be still more intense than yours, which is divided among so many. I cannot help being anxious for their future welfare, though thoroughly convinced of the folly of being so. Human prudence is so short sighted, that it is common to see the wisest schemes disappointed, and things often take a more favourable turn than there is any apparent reason to expect. My poor sister Gower, I really think, shortened her life by fretting at the disagreeable prospect

(1) The Marquis Scipione Maffei, the author of the "Verona Illustrata," 1733, folio, and the "Museum Veronense," 1149, folio, was very highly esteemed in the literary world as an antiquary and virtuoso.

of a numerous family, slenderly provided for; yet you see how well fortune has disposed of them. You may be as lucky as Lady Selina Bathurst. (1) I wish Lady Mary's destiny may lead her to a young gentleman I saw this spring. (2) He is son to Judge Hervey, but takes the name of Desbouverie, on inheriting a very large estate from his mother. He will not charm at first sight; but I never saw a young man of better understanding, with the strictest notions of honour and morality, and, in my opinion, a peculiar sweetness of temper. Our acquaintance was short, he being summoned to England on the death of his younger brother. I am persuaded he will never marry for money, nor even for beauty. Your daughter's character perfectly answers the description of what he wished for his bride. Our conversation happened on the subject of matrimony, in his last visit, his mind being much perplexed on that subject, supposing his father, who is old and infirm, had sent for him with some view of that sort.

You will laugh at the castles I build in relation to my grandchildren; and will scarcely think it possible that those I have never seen should so much employ my thoughts. I can assure you that they are, next to yourself, the objects of my tenderest concern; and it is not from custom, but my heart, when I send them my blessing, and say that I am your most affectionate mother,

M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, 1754.

MY DEAR CHILD,—I received yours of September 15, this morning, October 9, and am exceedingly glad of the health of you and your family. I am fond of your little Louisa: to say truth, I was afraid of a Bess, a Peg, or a Suky, which all give me the ideas of washing-tubs and scowering of kettles.

I am much obliged to Mr. Hamilton, which is according to the academy of compliments; more his goodness than my deserts: I saw him but twice, and both times in mixed company;

(1) Lady Selina Shirley, daughter of Robert Earl Ferrers, wife of Peter Bathurst, Esq. of Clarendon Park, Wilts.

(2) The gentleman referred to was the son of John Hervey of Beachworth, Esq., one of the Welsh Judges, by Anne eldest daughter of Christopher Desbouvries by Elizabeth his wife, daughter and sole heir of Ralph Foreman, Esq. of Beachworth in Surrey. This Christopher was the youngest son of Sir Edward Desbouvries, knighted in 1694, one of the ancestors of the Earl of Radnor.

but am surprised you have never mentioned Lord Roseberry, (1) by whom I sent a packet to you, and took some pains to show him civilities : he breakfasted with me at Padua : I gave him bread and butter of my own manufacture, which is the admiration of all the English. He promised to give you full information of myself, and all my employments. He seemed delighted with my house and gardens, and perhaps has forgot he ever saw me, or any thing that belonged to me. We have had many English here. Mr. G——le, (2) his lady, and her suite of adorers, deserve particular mention : he was so good to present me with his curious book : since the days of the Honourable Mr. Edward, nothing has ever been published like it. I told him the age wanted an Earl of Dorset to celebrate it properly ; and he was so well pleased with that speech, that he visited me every day, to the great comfort of madame, who was entertained, meanwhile, with parties of pleasure of another kind, though I fear I lost his esteem at last by refusing to correspond with him. However, I qualified my denial by complaining of my bad eyes not permitting me to multiply my correspondents. I could give you the characters of many other travellers, if I thought it would be of any use to you. It is melancholy to see the pains our pious minister takes to debauch the younger sort of them : but, as you say, all is melancholy that relates to Great Britain. I have a high value for Mr. Pitt's (3) probity and understanding, without having the honour of being acquainted with him. I am persuaded he is able to do whatever is within the bounds of possibility ; but there is an Augæan stable to be cleaned and several other labours, that I doubt if Hercules himself would be equal to.

If the Duke of Kingston only intends to build a hunting seat at Thorsby, I think it is most proper for the situation, which was certainly by nature never designed for a palace. I hope he will not employ the same architect that built his house in London. You see I am not entirely divested of family prejudices, though I thank the Lord they are not lively enough to give me violent uneasiness. I cannot help wishing well to my ever dear brother's children : however I have the conscious satisfaction

(1) James Primerose, Earl of Roseberry, died Nov. 28, 1755.

(2) Greville. Of the book in question, Horace Walpole, in a letter to General Conway, speaks thus: "A wonderful book, by a more wonderful author, Greville. It is called Maxims and Characters; several of the former are pretty; all the latter so absurd, that one in particular, which at the beginning you take for the character of a man, turns out to be the character of a post-chaise.

(3) The first Earl of Chatham.

of knowing I have done my duty towards them, as far as my power extended. Nobody can be served against their will. May all your young ones grow up an honour to you! My paper is out: I have scarce room to assure you, my dear child, that I am ever your most affectionate mother,

M. WORTLEY.

TO MR. WORTLEY.

Louvere, Dec. 19, N. S. 1754.

I RECEIVED yours of October 6, yesterday, which gave me great pleasure. I am flattered by finding that our sentiments are the same in regard to Lord Bolingbroke's writings, as you will see more clearly, if you ever have the long letter I have wrote to you on that subject. I believe he never read Horace, or any other author, with a design of instructing himself, thinking he was born to give precepts, and not to follow them: at least if he was not mad enough to have this opinion, he endeavoured to impose it on the rest of the world. All his works, being well considered, are little more than a panegyric on his own universal genius; many of his pretensions are as preposterously inconsistent, as if Sir Isaac Newton had aimed at being a critic in fashions, and wrote for the information of tailors and mantua makers. I am of opinion that he never looked into half the authors he quotes, and am much mistaken if he is not obliged to M. Bayle for the generality of his criticisms; for which reason he affects to despise him, that he may steal from him with the less suspicion. A diffuse style (though admired as florid by all half-witted readers) is commonly obscure, and always trifling. Horace has told us, that where words abound, sense is thinly spread; as trees overcharged with leaves bear little fruit.

You do not mention Lord Orrery, or perhaps would not throw away time in perusing that extraordinary work, addressed to a son, whom he educates with an intention that he should be a first minister, and promises to pray to God for him if ever he plays the knave in that station. I perceive that he has already been honoured with five editions. I wish that encouragement may prevail with him to give the world more memoirs. I am resolved to read them all, though they should multiply to as many tomes as Erasmus.

Here are no newspapers to be had but those printed under this government; consequently I never learn the births or deaths of private persons. I was ignorant of that of my poor friend the Duchess of Bolton, when my daughter's last

letter told me the death of the Duke, (1) and the jointure he has left his second Duchess.

I am very glad your health is so good. May that and every other blessing be ever yours. M. W. M.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, Jan. 1, 1755, N. S.

MY DEAR CHILD,—I wish you many new years, accompanied with every blessing that can render them agreeable; and that it was in my power to send you a better new year's gift than a dull letter: you must, however, accept it as well meant, though ill performed. I am glad you have found a house to please you. I know nothing of that part of the town you mention. I believe London would appear to me as strange as any place I have passed in my travels, and the streets as much altered as the inhabitants. I did not know Lady H. Wentworth (2) was married, though you speak of her children: you see my total ignorance: it would be amusing to me to hear various things that are as indifferent to you as an old almanac. I am sorry my friend Smollett (3) loses his time in translations: he has certainly a talent for invention, though I think it flags a little in his last work. Don Quixote is a difficult undertaking: I shall never desire to read any attempt to new-dress him. Though I am a mere piddler in the Spanish language, I had rather take pains to understand him in the original, than sleep over a stupid translation.

I thank you for your partiality in my favour. It is not my interest to rectify mistakes that are so obliging to me. To say truth, I think myself an uncommon kind of creature, being an old woman without superstition, peevishness, or censoriousness. I am so far from thinking my youth was past in an age of more

(1) He died August 26, 1754. His second wife was Lavinia Fenton, the celebrated Polly Peachum in Gay's Beggar's Opera, whom he married in 1751.

(2) Lady Harriet Wentworth, daughter of Thomas Earl of Strafford, was married to Henry Vernon Esq. 1743.

(3) Dr. Tobias Smollet published "Roderick Random" in 1748; "Peregrine Pickle" in 1751; from 1756 to 1763 was the original manager of the "Critical Review;" "Ferdinand Count Fathom" in 1753; translation of "Don Quixote" in 1754; "History of England," 1758; "Sir Launcelot Greaves," 1762; "Adventures of an Atom," 1769; "Travels in France and Italy," 1770; "Humphry Clinker," 1771. He died at Leghorn, Oct. 21, 1771, where he is buried.

virtue and sense than the present, that I am of opinion the world improves every day. I confess I remember to have dressed for St. James' Chapel, with the same thoughts your daughters will have at the opera; but am not of the Rambler's mind, that the church is the proper place to make love in; and the peepers behind a fan, who divided their glances between their lovers and their prayer book, were not at all modester than those that now laugh aloud in public walks. I tattle on, and forget you 're in town, and consequently I ought to shorten my letters, knowing very well that the same letter that would be read thrice over in the country, will be crammed into the pocket before 'tis half gone through, when people are in a hurry to go to the court or play-house. My compliments to Lord Bute, and blessings to you and yours, to whom I am ever a most affectionate mother,

M. W. M.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, Jan. 23, N. S. 1755.

I AM very sorry for your past indisposition, and, to say truth, not heartily glad of your present condition; but I neither do nor will admit of your excuses for your silence. I have already told you, some ten or twelve times over, that you should make your eldest daughter your secretary; it would be an ease to yourself, and highly improving to her, in every regard: you may, if you please, at once oblige your mother and instruct your daughter, by only talking half an hour over your tea in a morning.

The Duchess of Queensberry's (1) misfortune would move compassion in the hardest heart; yet, all circumstances coolly considered, I think the young lady deserves most to be pitied. being left in the terrible situation of a young and (I suppose) rich widowhood, which is walking blindfold, upon stilts, amidst precipices, though perhaps as little sensible of her danger as a child of a quarter old would be in the paws of a monkey leaping on the tiles of a house. I believe, like all others of your age, you have long been convinced there is no real happiness to be found or expected in this world. You have seen a court near enough to know neither riches nor power can secure it;

(1) The calamity here alluded to was the death of the Earl of Drumlanrig, son of Charles third Duke of Queensberry. He married a daughter of the Earl of Hopetoun, July 10, 1754, and was killed by the accidental explosion of a pistol the 20th October following.

and all human endeavours after felicity are as childish as running after sparrows to lay salt on their tails: but I ought to give you another information, which can only be learned by experience, that liberty is an idea equally chimerical, and has no real existence in this life. I can truly assure you, I have never been so little mistress of my own time and actions, as since I have lived alone. Mankind is placed in a state of dependency, not only on one another (which all are in some degree), but so many inevitable accidents thwart our designs, and limit our best laid projects. The poor efforts of our utmost prudence, and political schemes, appear, I fancy, in the eyes of some superior beings, like the pecking of a young linnet to break a wire cage, or the climbing of a squirrel in a hoop; the moral needs no explanation: let us sing as cheerfully as we can in our impenetrable confinement, and crack our nuts with pleasure from the little store that is allowed us.

My old friend, Cardinal Querini, is dead of an apoplectic fit, which I am sorry for, notwithstanding the disgust that happened between us, on the ridiculous account, of which I gave you the history a year ago. His memory will, probably, last as long as this province, having embellished it with so many noble structures, particularly a public library well furnished, richly adorned, and a college built for poor scholars, with salaries for masters, and plentifully endowed; many charitable foundations, and so large a part of the new cathedral (which will be one of the finest churches in Lombardy) has been built at his expense, he may be almost called the founder of it. He has left a considerable annuity to continue it, and deserves an eminent place among the prelates that have devoted what they received from the church to the use of the public, which is not here (as in some countries) so ungrateful to overlook benefits. Many statues have been erected, and medals cast to his honour, one of which has the figures of Piety, Learning, and Munificence, on the reverse, in the attitude of the three Graces. His funeral has been celebrated by the city with all the splendor it was capable of bestowing, and waited on by all ranks of the inhabitants.

You told me, some months since, that a box was made up for me. I have never had the bill of lading, and know not whether you have received the little bill of exchange sent by your most affectionate mother,

M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, March 1, 1755.

I PITY Lady Mary Coke (1) extremely. You will be surprised at this sentiment, when she is the present envy of her sex, in the possession of youth, health, wealth, wit, beauty, and liberty. All these seeming advantages will prove snares to her. She appears to me, as I observed in a former instance, to be walking blindfold, upon stilts, amidst precipices. She is at a dangerous time of life, when the passions are in full vigour, and, we are apt to flatter ourselves, the understanding arrived at maturity. People are never so near playing the fool, as when they think themselves wise: they lay aside that distrust which is the surest guard against indiscretion, and venture on many steps they would have trembled at, at fifteen; and, like children, are never so much exposed to falling, as when they first leave off leading-strings. I think nothing but a miracle, or the support of a guardian angel, can protect her. It is true (except I am much mistaken), nature has furnished her with one very good defence. I took particular notice of her, both from my own liking her, and her uncommonly obliging behaviour to me. She was then of an age not capable of much disguise, and I thought she had a great turn to economy: it is an admirable shield against the most fatal weaknesses. Those who have the good fortune to be born with that inclination seldom ruin themselves, and are early aware of the designs laid against them. Yet, with all that precaution, she will have so many plots contrived for her destruction, that she will find it very difficult to escape; and if she is a second time unhappily engaged, it will make her much more miserable than the first; as all misfortunes, brought on by our own imprudence, are the most wounding to a sensible heart. The most certain security would be that diffidence which naturally arises from an impartial self-examination. But this is the hardest of all tasks, requiring great reflection, long retirement, and is strongly repugnant to our own vanity, which very unwillingly reveals, even to ourselves, our common frailty, though it is every way a useful study. Mr. Locke, who has made a more exact dissection of the human mind than any man before him, declares, that he gained all his knowledge from the consideration of him-

(1) Lady Mary Coke, the fifth daughter of John Duke of Argyll, was married to Edward Lord Viscount Coke, eldest son of the Earl of Leicester, who died in 1755. The title became extinct in that family in 1759.

self. It is indeed necessary to judge of others. You condemn Lord Cornbury without knowing what he could say in his justification. I am persuaded he thought he performed an act of rigid justice, in excluding the Duchess of Queensberry from an inheritance to which she had no natural, though a legal, right; especially having had a large portion from her real father. I have heard him talk on that subject without naming names, and call it a robbery within the law. He carried that notion to a great height. I agreed with him, that a woman who produced a false child into a family, incurred the highest degree of guilt (being irreparable); but I could not be of his opinion, that it was the duty of the child, in such a case, to renounce the fortune the law entitled it to. You see he has acted by a maxim he imagined just. Lady E——x (1) being, inside and out, resembling Lord Clarendon; and whoever remembers Lord Carleton's eyes, must confess they now shine in the Duchess' face. I am not bribed, by Lord Cornbury's behaviour to me, to find excuses for him; but I have always endeavoured to look on the conduct of my acquaintance without any regard to their way of acting towards me. I can say, with truth, I have strictly adhered to this principle whenever I have been injured; but I own, to my shame be it spoken, the love of flattery has sometimes prevailed on me, under the mask of gratitude, to think better of people than they deserved, when they have professed more value for me, than I was conscious of meriting.—I slide, insensibly, into talking of myself, though I always resolve against it. I will rescue you from so dull a subject, by concluding my letter with my compliments to Lord Bute, my blessing to my grand-children, and the assurance of my being ever your most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

April 1, 1755.

MY DEAR CHILD,—I have this minute received yours of Feb. 1. I had one before (which I have answered), in which you mention some changes amongst your ministerial subalterns. I see the motions of the puppets, but not the master that directs them; nor can guess at him. By the help of some miserable newspapers, with my own reflections, I can form such a dim telescope as serves astronomers to survey the moon. I can discern spots and inequalities, but your beauties (if you have any) are invisible to me: your provinces of politics, gallantry,

(1) Essex.

and literature, all *terra incognita*. The merchant, who undertook to deliver my ring to Lady Jane, assures me it is delivered, though I have no advice of it either from her or you. Here are two new fortunes far superior to Miss Crawley's. They are become so by an accident which would be very extraordinary in London. Their father was a Greek, and had been several years chief farmer of the customs at Venice. About ten days ago, a creditor, who had a demand of five hundred crowns, was very importunate with him. He answered he was not satisfied it was due to him, and would examine his accounts. After much pressing without being able to obtain any other reply, the fellow drew his stiletto, and in one stroke stabbed him to the heart. The noise of his fall brought in his servants; the resolute assassin drew a pistol from his pocket and shot himself through the head. The merchant has left no will, and is said to have been worth four millions of sequins, all which will be divided between two daughters. If it be only half as much, they are (I believe) the greatest heiresses in Europe. It is certain he has died immensely rich. The eldest lady is but eighteen; and both of them are reputed to be very beautiful. I hear they declare they will choose husbands of their own country and religion, and refuse any other prospects. If they keep their resolution I shall admire them much. Since they are destined to be a prey, 't is a sort of patriotism to enrich their own country with their spoils. You put me out of patience when you complain you want subjects to entertain me. You need not go out of your own walls for that purpose. You have within them ten strangers to me, whose characters interest me extreemly. I should be glad to know something of them inside and out. What provision of wit and beauty has Heaven allotted them? I shall be sorry if all the talents have fallen into the male part of your family. Do not forget, amongst the books, Fielding's Posthumous Works, his Journey to the next World, and Jon. Wild's Memoirs; also those of a Young Lady, and the History of London. I have said this already, but am afraid the letter is lost among many others.

I congratulate Mrs. Dunch on her good fortune; the best proof of the force of industry, without any other qualification. She has brought more projects to bear than any body I ever knew; many of which I am sure I should have failed in. Tell me if her pension is continued, which was one of her views when I left England.

This is a strange miscellaneous letter; consider my age,

and forgive the weaknesses of your most affectionate mother,

M. WORTLEY.

Compliments to Lord Bute, and blessings to the rest of your dear ones.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, July 20, N. S. 1755.

MY DEAR CHILD,—I have now read over the books you were so good to send, and intend to say something of them all, though some are not worth speaking of. I shall begin, in respect to his dignity, with Lord Bolingbroke, who is a glaring proof how far vanity can blind a man, and how easy it is to varnish over to one's self the most criminal conduct. He declares he always loved his country, though he confesses he endeavoured to betray her to popery and slavery; and loved his friends, though he abandoned them in distress, with all the blackest circumstances of treachery. His account of the peace of Utrecht is almost equally unfair or partial: I shall allow that, perhaps, the views of the Whigs, at that time, were too vast, and the nation, dazzled by military glory, had hopes too sanguine; but surely the same terms that the French consented to, at the treaty of Gertruydenberg, might have been obtained; or if the displacing of the Duke of Marlborough raised the spirits of our enemies to a degree of refusing what they had before offered, how can he excuse the guilt of removing him from the head of a victorious army, and exposing us to submit to any articles of peace, being unable to continue the war? I agree with him, that the idea of conquering France is a wild extravagant notion, and would, if possible, be impolitic; but she might have been reduced to such a state, as would have rendered her incapable of being terrible to her neighbours for some ages: nor should we have been obliged, as we have done almost ever since, to bribe the French ministers to let us live in quiet. So much for his political reasonings, which, I confess, are delivered in a florid, easy style; but I cannot be of Lord Orrery's opinion, that he is one of the best English writers. Well turned periods, or smooth lines, are not the perfection either of prose or verse; they may serve to adorn, but can never stand in the place of good sense. Copiousness of words, however ranged, is always false eloquence, though it will ever impose on some sort of understandings. How many readers and admirers has Madame de Sevigné, who only gives us, in a lively manner, and fashion-

able phrases, mean sentiments, vulgar prejudices, and endless repetitions? Sometimes the little tattle of a fine lady, sometimes that of an old nurse, always tittle tattle; yet so well gilt over by airy expressions, and a flowing style, she will always please the same people to whom Lord Bolingbroke will shine as a first rate author. She is so far to be excused, as her letters were not intended for the press; while he labours to display to posterity all the wit and learning he is master of, and sometimes spoils a good argument by a profusion of words, running out into several pages a thought that might have been more clearly expressed in a few lines, and, what is worse, often falls into contradiction and repetitions, which are almost unavoidable to all voluminous writers, and can only be forgiven to those retailers, whose necessity compels them to diurnal scribbling, who load their meaning with epithets, and run into digressions, because (in the jockey phrase) it rids ground, that is, covers a certain quantity of paper, to answer the demand of the day. A great part of Lord Bolingbroke's letters are designed to show his reading, which, indeed, appears to have been very extensive; but I cannot perceive that such a minute account of it can be of any use to the pupil he pretends to instruct; nor can I help thinking he is far below either Tillotson or Addison, even in style, though the latter was sometimes more diffuse than his judgment approved, to furnish out the length of a daily Spectator. I own I have small regard for Lord Bolingbroke as an author, and the highest contempt for him as a man. He came into the world greatly favoured both by nature and fortune, blest with a noble birth, heir to a large estate, endowed with a strong constitution, and, as I have heard, a beautiful figure, high spirits, a good memory, and a lively apprehension, which was cultivated by a learned education: all these glorious advantages being left to the direction of a judgment stifled by unbounded vanity, he dishonoured his birth, lost his estate, ruined his reputation, and destroyed his health, by a wild pursuit of eminence even in vice and trifles.

I am far from making misfortune a matter of reproach. I know there are accidental occurrences not to be foreseen or avoided by human prudence, by which a character may be injured, wealth dissipated, or a constitution impaired: but I think I may reasonably despise the understanding of one who conducts himself in such a manner as naturally produces such lamentable consequences, and continues in the same destructive paths to the end of a long life, ostentatiously boasting of morals and philosophy in print, and with equal ostentation

bragging of the scenes of low debauchery in public conversation, though deplorably weak both in mind and body, and his virtue and his vigour in a state of non-existence. His confederacy with Swift and Pope puts me in mind of that of Bessus and his sword-men, in the King and no King, who endeavour to support themselves by giving certificates of each other's merit. Pope has triumphantly declared that they may do and say whatever silly things they please, they will still be the greatest geniuses nature ever exhibited. I am delighted with the comparison given of their benevolence, which is indeed most amply figured by a circle in the water, which widens till it comes to nothing at all; but I am provoked at Lord Bolingbroke's misrepresentation of my favourite Atticus, who seems to have been the only Roman that, from good sense, had a true notion of the times in which he lived, in which the republic was inevitably perishing, and the two factions, who pretended to support it, equally endeavouring to gratify their ambition in its ruin. A wise man, in that case, would certainly declare for neither, and try to save himself and family from the general wreck, which could not be done but by a superiority of understanding acknowledged on both sides. I see no glory in losing life or fortune by being the dupe of either, and very much applaud that conduct which could preserve an universal esteem amidst the fury of opposite parties. We are obliged to act vigorously, where action can do any good; but in a storm, when it is impossible to work with success, the best hands and ablest pilots may laudably gain the shore if they can. Atticus could be a friend to men, without awaking their resentment, and be satisfied with his own virtue without seeking popular fame: he had the reward of his wisdom in his tranquillity, and will ever stand among the few examples of true philosophy, either ancient or modern.

You must forgive this tedious dissertation. I hope you read in the same spirit I write, and take as proof of affection whatever is sent you by your truly affectionate mother,

M. WORTLEY.

I must add a few words on the essay on Exile, which I read with attention, as a subject that touched me. I found the most abject dejection under a pretended fortitude. That the author felt it, can be no doubt to one who knows (as I do) the mean submissions and solemn promises he made to obtain a return, flattering himself (I suppose) he must of course appear to be at the head of the administration, as every ensign of sixteen fancies he is in a fair way to be a general, on the first sight of his commission.

You will think I have been too long on the character of Atticus. I own I took pleasure in explaining it. Pope thought himself covertly very severe on Addison, by giving him that name; and I feel indignation whenever he is abused, both from his own merit, and because he was ever your father's friend; besides that it is naturally digusting to see him lampooned after his death by the same man who paid him the most servile court while he lived, and was besides highly obliged by him.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, Sept. 22, 1755.

My dear Child,— I received, two days ago, the box of books you were so kind to send; but I can scarce say whether my pleasure or disappointment was the greater. I was much pleased to see before me a fund of amusement, but heartily vexed to find your letter consisting only of three lines and a half. Why will you not employ Lady Mary as secretary, if it is troublesome to you to write? I have told you over and over, you may at the same time oblige your mother and improve your daughter, both which I should think very agreeable to yourself. You can never want something to say. The history of your nursery, if you had no other subject to write on, would be very acceptable to me. I am such a stranger to every thing in England, I should be glad to hear more particulars relating to the families I am acquainted with—if Miss Liddel(1) marries the Lord Euston I know, or his nephew, who has succeeded him; if Lord Berkeley(2) has left children; and several trifles of that sort, that would be a satisfaction to my curiosity. I am sorry for H. Fielding's death, not only as I shall read no more of his writings, but I believe he lost more than others, as no man enjoyed life more than he did, though few had less reason to do so, the highest of his preferment being raking in the lowest sinks of vice and misery. I should think it a nobler and less nauseous employment to be one of the staff-officers that conduct the nocturnal weddings. His happy constitution (even when he had, with great pains, half demolished it) made him forget every thing when he was before a venison pasty, or over a flask of champaigne, and I am persuaded he has known more happy moments than any prince upon earth. His natural spirits gave him rapture with his cook-maid, and cheerfulness

(1) Married Augustus Henry Duke of Grafton, Jan. 29, 1756.

(2) Augustus Earl of Berkeley died Jan, 9, 1755, and left two sons and two daughters.

when he was starving in a garret. There was a great similitude between his character and that of Sir Richard Steele. He had the advantage both in learning, and, in my opinion, genius: they both agreed in wanting money in spite of all their friends, and would have wanted it, if their hereditary lands had been as extensive as their imagination; yet each of them was so formed for happiness, it is pity he was not immortal. I have read the Cry; and if I would write in the style to be admired by good Lord Orrery, I would tell you, "the Cry" made me ready to cry, and the "Art of Tormenting" tormented me very much. I take them to be Sally Fielding's, and also the female Quixote: the plan of that is pretty, but ill executed; on the contrary, the fable of the Cry is the most absurd I ever saw, but the sentiments generally just; and I think, if well dressed, would make a better body of ethics than Bolingbroke's. Her inventing new words, that are neither more harmonious nor significant than those already in use, is intolerable. The most edifying part of the journey to Lisbon, is the history of the journey to Lisbon, is the history of the kitten: I was the more touched by it, having a few days before found one, in deplorable circumstances, in a neighbouring vineyard. I did not only relieve her present wants with some excellent milk, but had her put into a clean basket, and brought to my own house, where she has lived ever since very comfortably.

I desire to have Fielding's Posthumous Works, with his Memoirs of Jonathan Wild, and Journey to the next World; also the Memoirs of Verocand, a man of pleasure, and those of a Young Lady. You will call this trash, trumpery, etc. I can assure you I was more entertained by G. Edwards than H. St. John, of whom you have sent me duplicates. I see new story books with the same pleasure your eldest daughter does a new dress, or the youngest a new baby. I thank God I can find play things for my age. I am not of Cowley's mind, that this world is—

A dull, ill acted comedy:

Nor of Mrs. Philips's, that it is—

A too well acted tragedy.

I look upon it as a very pretty farce, for those that can see it in that light. I confess a severe critic, that would examine by ancient rules, might fix many defects; but 'tis ridiculous to judge seriously of a puppet-show. Those that can laugh, and be diverted with absurdities, are the wisest spectators, be it of writings, actions, or people.

The Stage Coach has some grotesque figures that amuse: I

place it in the rank of Charlotte Summers, and perhaps it is by the same author. I am pleased with Sir Herald for recording a generous action of the Duke of Montagu, which I know to be true, with some variation of circumstances. You should have given me a key to the Invisible Spy, particularly to the catalogue of books in it. I know not whether the conjugal happiness of the Duke of Bedford is intended as a compliment or an irony.

This letter is as long and as dull as any of Richardson's. I am ashamed of it, notwithstanding my maternal privilege of being tiresome.

I return many thanks to Lord Bute for the china, which I am sure I shall be very fond of, though I have not yet seen it. I wish for three of Pinchbec's watches, shagrine cases, and enamelled dial plates. When I left England, they were five guineas each. You may imagine they are for presents; one for my doctor, who is exactly Parson Adams in another profession, and the others for two priests, to whom I have some obligations.

This Richardson is a strange fellow. I heartily despise him, and eagerly read him, nay, sob over his works, in a most scandalous manner. The two first tomes of Clarissa touched me, as being very resembling to my maiden days; and I find in the pictures of Sir Thomas Grandison and his lady, what I have heard of my mother, and seen of my father.

This letter is grown (I know not how) into an immeasurable length. I answer it to my conscience as a just judgment on you, for the shortness of yours. Remember my unalterable maxim, where we love we have always something to say; consequently my pen never tires when expressing to you the thoughts of Your most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, March 2, N. S. 1756.

DEAR CHILD,—I had the happiness of a letter from your father last post, by which I find you are in good health, though I have not heard from you for a long time. This frequent interruption of our correspondence is a great uneasiness to me: I charge it on the neglect or irregularity of the post. I sent you a letter by Mr. Anderson a great while ago, to which I never had any answer; neither have I ever heard from him since, though I am fully persuaded he has wrote concerning some little commissions I gave him. I should be very sorry he thought I neglected to thank him for his civilities. I desire Lord Bute

would inquire about him. I saw him in company with a very pretty pupil, who seemed to me a promising youth. I wish he would fall in love with my grand-daughter. I dare say you laugh at this early design of providing for her: take it as a mark of my affection for you and yours, which is without any mixture of self-interest, since, with my age and infirmities, there is little probability of my living to see them established. I no more expect to arrive at the age of the Duchess of Marlborough than to that of Methusalem; neither do I desire it. I have long thought myself useless to the world. I have seen one generation pass away; and it is gone; for I think there are very few of those left that flourished in my youth. You will perhaps call these melancholy reflections: they are not so. There is a quiet after the abandoning of pursuits, something like the rest that follows a laborious day. I tell you this for your comfort. It was formerly a terrifying view to me, that I should one day be an old woman. I now find that Nature has provided pleasures for every state. Those are only unhappy who will not be contented with what she gives, but strive to break through her laws, by affecting a perpetuity of youth, which appears to me as little desirable at present as the babies do to you, that were the delight of your infancy. I am at the end of my paper, which shortens the sermon.

M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Venice, March 22, 1756.

I HAVE received, but this morning, the first box of china Lord Bute has been so obliging to send me. I am quite charmed with it, but wish you had sent in it the note of the contents; it has been so long deposited, that it is not impossible some diminution may have happened. Every thing that comes from England is precious to me, to the very hay that is employed in packing. I should be glad to know any thing that could be an agreeable return from hence. There are many things I could send; but they are either contraband, or the custom would cost more than they are worth. I look out for a picture; the few that are in this part of Italy, are those that remain in families, where they are entailed, and I might as well pretend to send you a palace. I am extremely pleased with the account you gave of your father's health. I have wrote to desire his consent in the disposal of poor Lady Oxford's legacy; I do not doubt obtaining it. It has been both my interest and my duty to study his character, and I can say,

with truth, I never knew any man so capable of a generous action.

A late adventure here makes a great noise from the rank of the people concerned: the Marchioness Licinia Bentivoglio, who was heiress of one branch of the Martinenghi, and brought ten thousand gold sequins to her husband, and the expectation of her father's estate, three thousand pounds sterling per annum, the most magnificent palace at Brescia (finer than any in London), another in the country, and many other advantages of woods, plate, jewels, etc. The Cardinal Bentivoglio, his uncle, thought he could not choose better, though his nephew might certainly have chose among all the Italian ladies, being descended from the sovereigns of Bologna, actually a grandee of Spain, a noble Venetian, and in possession of twenty-five thousand pounds sterling per annum, with immense wealth in palaces, furniture, and absolute dominion in some of his lands. The girl was pretty, and the match was with the satisfaction of both families; but she brought with her such a diabolical temper, and such *Luciferan* pride, that neither husband, relations, or servants, had ever a moment's peace with her. After about eight years' warfare, she eloped one fair morning, and took refuge in Venice, leaving her two daughters, the eldest scarce six years old, to the care of the exasperated Marquis. Her father was so angry at her extravagant conduct, that he would not, for some time, receive her into his house; but, after some months, and much solicitation, parental fondness prevailed, and she remained with him ever since, notwithstanding all the efforts of her husband, who tried kindness, submission, and threats, to no purpose. The Cardinal came twice to Brescia, her own father joined his intreaties, nay, *his holiness* wrote a letter with his own hands, and made use of the church authority, but he found it harder to reduce one woman than ten heretics. She was inflexible, and lived ten years in this state of reprobation. Her father died last winter, and left her his whole estate for her life, and afterwards to her children. Her eldest was now marriageable, and disposed of to the nephew of Cardinal Valentino Gonzagua, first minister at Rome. She would neither appear at the wedding, nor take the least notice of a dutiful letter sent by the bride. The old Cardinal (who was passionately fond of his illustrious name) was so much touched with the apparent extinction of it, that it was thought to have hastened his death. She continued in the enjoyment of her ill humour, living in great splendour, though almost solitary, having, by some impertinence or other, disgusted all her acquaintance, till about a month ago, when her

woman brought her a bason of broth, which she usually drank in her bed. She took a few spoonfuls of it, and then cried out, it was so bad it was impossible to endure it. Her chamber-maids were so used to hear her exclamations, that they ate it up very comfortably; they were both seized with the same pangs, and died the next day. She sent for physicians, who judged her poisoned; but, as she had taken a small quantity, by the help of antidotes she recovered, yet is still in a languishing condition. Her cook was examined, and racked, always protesting entire innocence, and swearing he had made the soup in the same manner he was accustomed. You may imagine the noise of this affair. She loudly accused her husband, it being the interest of no other person to wish her out of the world. He resides at Ferrara (about which the greatest part of his lands lie), and was soon informed of this accident. He sent doctors to her, whom she would not see, sent vast alms to all the convents to pray for her health, and ordered a number of masses to be said in every church of Brescia and Ferrara. He sent letters to the senate at Venice, and published manifestoes in all the capital cities, in which he professes his affection to her, and abhorrence of any attempt against her, and has a cloud of witnesses that he never gave her the least reason of complaint, and even since her leaving him has always spoke of her with kindness, and courted her return. He is said to be remarkably sweet tempered, and has the best character of any man of quality in this country. If the death of her women did not seem to confirm it, her accusation would gain credit with nobody. She is certainly very sincere in it herself, being so persuaded he has resolved her death, that she dare not take the air, apprehending to be assassinated, and has imprisoned herself in her chamber, where she will neither eat nor drink any thing that she does not see tasted by all her servants. The physicians now say, that perhaps the poison might fall into the broth accidentally; I confess I do not perceive the possibility of it. As to the cook suffering the rack, that is a mere jest, where people have money enough to bribe the executioner. I decide nothing; but such is the present destiny of a lady, who would have been one of Richardson's heroines, having never been suspected of the least gallantry; hating, and being hated universally; of a most noble spirit, it being proverbial—" as proud as the Marchioness Licinia."

I am afraid I have tired you with my long story: I thought it singular enough to amuse you. I believe your censure will be different from that of the ladies here, who all range themselves in the party of the Marquis Guido. They say he is a

handsome man, little past forty, and would easily find a second wife, notwithstanding the suspicion raised on this occasion. Many customs, and some laws, are as extraordinary here as the situation of the capital.

I would write to Lord Bute to thank him, if I did not think it would be giving him trouble. I have not less gratitude: I desire you would assure him of it, and that I am to you both

Your most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

TO LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU.

London, 1756.

YOURS of the 8th of March came hither on the 28th, which is the time in which letters usually pass between London and Venice. I bundle up all your letters, and keep a list of the dates of what I send you; so that I cannot mistake as to either. I do not remember that any letter sent to me from a foreign country, besides yours, ever miscarried. As to those I send abroad, I always send two servants with them to the post; so that I do not trust to one servant's honesty: and the officer of the post sees there is evidence of the delivery; so that his neglect or fraud may easily appear. This method is taken by all foreign ministers of state.

I have now something to mention that I believe will be agreeable to you: I mean some particulars relating to Lord Bute, which you have not learned from the prints, nor from our minister at Venice. He stood higher in the late Prince of Wales's favour than any man. His attendance was frequent at Leicester-house, where this young Prince has resided, and since his father's death has continued without intermission, till new officers were to be placed about him. It is said that another person was designed to be groom of the stole; but that the Prince's earnest request was complied with in my lord's favour. It is supposed that the governors, preceptors, etc., who were before about him, will be now set aside, and that my lord is his principal adviser. It is not easy to express how well bred and reasonable the Prince always appears at his public levee, which is every Thursday, and on all other occasions. The King of France, and the Empress of Germany, always show themselves to great advantage; and this young Prince's behaviour is equal to that of either of them. He is supposed to know the true state of this country, and to have the best inclinations to do all in his power to make it flourish.

These appearances do much honour to my lord; and the

continuance of his favour is, I believe, wished by all that are unconnected with some of those who have been ministers of state.

E. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, May 30, 1756.

MY DEAR CHILD,—I sent you a long letter very lately, and enclosed one to Lady Jane. I fear I cannot prevail on Mr. Prescot to take care of my letters; if he should do it, I beg you would be very obliging to him; remember civility costs nothing and buys every thing: your daughters should engrave that maxim in their hearts.

I am sorry Sir William Lowther (1) died unmarried; he ought to have left some of his breed, which are almost extinct: he died unluckily for his acquaintance, though I think fortunately for himself, being yet ignorant of the ingratitude and vileness of mankind. He knew not what it was to lament misplaced obligations, and thought himself blessed in many friends, whom a short time would have shown to be worthless, mercenary, designing, scoundrels. The most tender disposition grows callous by miserable experience: I look upon it as the reason, why so many old people leave immense wealth, in a lump, to heirs they neither love nor esteem; and others, like Lord Sundon, leave it, at random, to they know not who. He was not a covetous man, but had seen so little merit, and was so well acquainted with the vices of mankind, I believe he thought there was none among them deserved any particular distinction. I have passed a long life, and may say, with truth, have endeavoured to purchase friends; accident has put it in my power to confer great benefits, yet I never met with any return, nor indeed any true affection, but from dear Lady Oxford, who owed me nothing. Did not these considerations restrain natural generosity, I am of opinion we should see many Sir William Lowthers: neither is it saying much in favour of the human heart; it is certain that the highest gratification of vanity is found in bestowing; but, when we plainly foresee being exposed by it to insults, nay, perhaps, abuses, which are often liberally dispersed by those who wish to hide that they are obliged, we abandon the pleasure rather than suffer the consequence. The first shocks, received from this conduct of protesting friends, are felt very severely. I now

(1) Sir William Lowther, who died in 1756, bequeathed 100,000*l.* in legacies to his several friends with whom he was chiefly associated.

expect them, and they affect me with no more surprise than rain after sun-shine. The little good I do is scattered with a sparing hand, against my inclination; but I now know the necessity of managing the hopes of others, as the only links that bind attachment, or even secure us from injuries. Was it possible for me to elevate any body from the station in which they are born, I now would not do it: perhaps it is a rebellion against that Providence that has placed them there; all we ought to do is to endeavour to make them easy in the rank assigned them.

I hope you will not forget to send me the bill of lading, without which I may chance to lose the box, which is very precious to, my dear child,

Your most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Venice, Nov. 8, 1756.

DEAR CHILD,—You are extremely good to take so much care of my trifling commissions in the midst of so many important occupations. You judged very right on the subject of Mr. W. I saw him often both at Florence and Genoa, and you may believe I know him. I am not surprised at the character of poor Charles Fielding's son.(1) The epithet of *fair* and *foolish* belonged to the whole family; and, as he was over persuaded to marry an ugly woman, I suppose his offspring may have lost the beauty, but retained the folly, in full bloom. Colonel Otway, younger brother to Lady Bridget's (2) spouse, came hither with Lord Mandeville; he told me that she has a daughter with the perfect figure of Lady Winchilsea. I wish she may meet with as good friends as I was to her aunt; but I won't trouble you with old stories. I have, indeed, my head so full of one, that I hardly know what I say about it: I am advised to tell it you, though I had resolved not to do it. I leave it to your prudence to act as you think proper; commonly speaking, silence and neglect are the best answer to defamation, but this is a case so peculiar, that I am persuaded it never happened to any one but myself.

(1) Charles Fielding was the third son of Basil fourth Earl of Denbigh. He married Mary, daughter of Sir Thomas Palmer, of Wingham, in Kent, Bart. widow of Sir Brook Brydges, Bart.

(2) Lady Bridget was second daughter of Basil fourth Earl of Denbigh; married to James Otway, of the county of Kent, Esq.

Some few months before Lord William Hamilton (1) married there appeared a foolish song, said to be wrote by a poetical great lady, who I really think was the character of Lady Arabella, in the Female Quixote (without the beauty): you may imagine such a conduct, at court, made him superlatively ridiculous. Lady Delawar, (2) a woman of great merit, with whom I lived in much intimacy, showed this fine performance to me; we were very merry in supposing what answer Lord William would make to these passionate addresses; she bid me to say something for a poor man, who had nothing to say for himself. I wrote, *extempore*, on the back of the song, some stanzas that went perfectly well to the tune. She promised they should never appear as mine, and faithfully kept her word. By what accident they have fallen into the hands of that thing Dodsley (3) I know not, but he has printed them as addressed, by me, to the last man I should have addressed them to, and my own words as his answer. I do not believe either Job or Socrates ever had such a provocation. You will tell me, it cannot hurt me with any acquaintance I ever had: it is true; but it is an excellent piece of scandal for the same sort of people that propagate, with success, that your nurse left her estate, husband, and family, to go with me to England; and, that then I turned her to starve, after defrauding her of God knows what. I thank God witches are out of fashion, or I should expect to have it deposed, by several credible witnesses, that I had been seen flying through the air on a broomstick, etc.

I am really sick with vexation, but ever your most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

(1) Lord William Hamilton, second son of James Duke of Hamilton, married, 1732, Anne, daughter of Francis Hawes, Esquire; and dying without issue, 1734, his widow married, in May 1735, William second Viscount Vane.

(2) Probably Margaret, daughter and heir of John Freeman, of the city of London, merchant, wife of John the sixth Lord Delawar, and mother of John the first Earl; she died 1738.

(3) Dodsley's Collection of Poems was published in three volumes in 1748. The fourth volume appeared in 1749, and the fifth and sixth in 1756. In the sixth volume, p. 230, the dialogue (if it may be so called) between Sir William Young and Lady Mary, is printed, and very erroneously applied.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Padua, Dec. 28, 1756.

MY DEAR CHILD,—I received yours, of November 29th, with great pleasure, some days before I had the box of books, and am highly delighted with the snuff-box; that manufacfacture is at present as much in fashion at Venice as at London. In general, all the shops are full of English merchandise and they boast of every thing as coming from London, in the same stile as they used to do from Paris. I was shown a set of furniture, of their own invention, in a taste entirely new; it consists of eight large armed chairs, the same number of sconces, a table, and prodigious mirror, all of glass. It is impossible to imagine their beauty: they deserve to be placed in a prince's dressing-room, or grand cabinet; the price demanded is 400l. They would be a very proper decoration for the apartment of a prince so young and beautiful as ours. (1)

The present ministry promises better counsels than have been followed in my time. I am extremely glad to hear the continuation of your father's health, and that you follow his advice. I am really persuaded (without any dash of partiality) no man understands the interest of England better, or has it more at heart. I am obliged to him for whatever he does for you. I will not indulge myself in troubling you with long letters or commissions, when you are charged with so much business at home and abroad; I shall only repeat the Turkish maxim, which I think includes all that is necessary in a *court* life: "Caress the favourites, avoid the unfortunate, and trust nobody." You may think the second rule ill-natured; melancholy experience has convinced me of the ill consequence of mistaking distress for merit; there is no mistake more productive of evil. I could add many arguments to enforce this truth, but will not tire your patience.

I am exceedingly obliged to General Graham for his civilities; he tell me he has wrote to you the account of poor Mr. Cunningham's sad story; I wish it do not come too late; the newspaper says the mean capitulator is rewarded, I fear the generous defender will be neglected.

I intend to correspond with Lady J. I confess I was much pleased with her little letter; and, supposing Lady M. is commenced fine lady, she may have no leisure to read or answer an old grandmother's letters. I presume Lady J. is to play least in sight till her sister is disposed of: if she loves writing,

(1) Afterwards George III.

it may be an employment not disagreeable to herself, and will be extremely grateful to me, who am your affectionate mother,

M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, June 10, 1757.

IT is very true, my dear child, we cannot now maintain a family with the product of a flock, though I do not doubt the present sheep afford as much wool and milk as any of their ancestors; and 't is certain our natural wants are not more numerous than formerly; but the world is past its infancy, and will no longer be contented with spoon meat. Time has added great improvements, but those very improvements have introduced a train of artificial necessities. A collective body of men make a gradual progress in understanding, like that of a single individual. When I reflect on the vast increase of useful, as well as speculative, knowledge the last three hundred years has produced, and that the peasants of this age have more conveniences that the first emperors of Rome had any notion of, I imagine we are now arrived at that period which answers to fifteen. I cannot think we are older, when I recollect the many palpable follies which are still (almost) universally persisted in: I place that of war as senseless as the boxing of school-boys, and whenever we come to man's estate (perhaps a thousand years hence) I do not doubt it will appear as ridiculous as the pranks of unlucky lads. Several discoveries will then be made, and several truths made clear, of which we have now no more idea, than the ancients had of the circulation of the blood, or the optics of Sir Isaac Newton.

You will believe me in a very dull humour when I fill my letter with such whims, and indeed so I am. I have just received the news of Sir J. Gray's departure, and am exceedingly vexed I did not know of his designed journey. I suppose he would have carried my token; (1) and now I utterly despair of an opportunity of sending it, and therefore enclose a note, on Child, for the value of it.

When you see Lady Rich, pray do not fail to present my thanks and compliments. I desire the same to every body that thinks it worth while to inquire after me. You mention a Colonel Rich as her son; I thought he had been killed in Scotland. You see my entire ignorance of all English affairs, and consequently whatever you tell me of my acquaintance has the

(1) Lady Mary sent a present annually to one of her grand-children.

merit of novelty to me, who correspond with nobody but yourself and Lady Oxford, whose retirement and ill health does not permit her to send me much news.

I expect a letter of thanks from my grand-daughter: I wrote to my grandmother long before her age. I desire you would not see it, being willing to judge of her genius. I know I shall read it with some partiality, which I cannot avoid to all that is yours, as I am your most affectionate mother,

M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Padoua, Sept. 5, 1757.

I WROTE to you very lately, my dear child, in answer to that letter Mr. Hamilton brought me: he was so obliging to come on purpose from Venice to deliver it, as I believe I told you; but I am so highly delighted with this, dated August 4, giving an account of your little colony, I cannot help setting pen to paper, to tell you the melancholy joy I had in reading it. You would have laughed to see the old fool weep over it. I now find that age, when it does not harden the heart and sour the temper, naturally returns to the milky disposition of infancy. Time has the same effect on the mind as on the face. The predominant passion, the strongest feature, become more conspicuous from the others retiring; the various views of life are abandoned, from want of ability to preserve them, as the fine complexion is lost in wrinkles: but, as surely as a large nose grows larger, and a wide mouth wider, the tender child in your nursery will be a tender old woman, though, perhaps, reason may have restrained the appearance of it, till the mind, relaxed, is no longer capable of concealing its weakness; for weakness it is to indulge any attachment at a period of life when we are sure to part with life itself, at very short warning. According to the good English proverb, young people may die, but old must. You see I am very industrious in finding comfort to myself in my exit, and to guard, as long as I can, against the peevishness which makes age miserable in itself and contemptible to others. 'T is surprising to me, that, with the most inoffensive conduct, I should meet enemies, when I cannot be envied for any thing, and have pretensions to nothing.

Is it possible, the old Colonel Duncombe (1) I knew, should be Lord Feversham, and married to a young wife? As to Lord

(1) Anthony Duncombe, created Lord Feversham 1747; which title became extinct in 1763 on his dying without male issue. He was the nephew of Sir Charles Duncombe, Lord Major of London 1709.

Ranelagh, I confess it must be a very bitter draught to submit to take his name, but his lady has had a short purgatory, and now enjoys affluence with a man she likes, who I am told is a man of merit, which I suppose she thinks preferable to Lady Selina's nursery. Here are no old people in this country, neither in dress or gallantry: I know only my friend Antonio, who is true to the memory of his adored lady; her picture is always in his sight, and he talks of her in the style of *pastor fido*. I believe I owe his favour to having shown him her miniature, by Rosalba, which I bought at London: perhaps you remember it in my little collection: he is really a man of worth and sense. Hearing it reported, I need not say by whom, that my retirement was owing to having lost all my money at play, at Avignon, he sent privately for my chief servant, and desired him to tell him naturally if I was in any distress; and not only offered, but pressed, him to lay three thousand sequins on my toilet. I don't believe I could borrow that sum, without good security, among my great relations. I thank God I had no occasion to make use of this generosity; but I am sure you will agree with me, that I ought never to forget the obligation. I could give some other instances, in which he has shown his friendship, in protecting me from mortifications, invented by those that ought to have assisted me; but 't is a long tiresome story. You will be surprised to hear the general does not yet know these circumstances; he arrived at Venice but a few days before I left it; and promising me to come to Padua, at the fair, I thought I should have time sufficient to tell him my history. Indeed, I was in hopes he would have accepted my invitation of lodging in my house; but his multiplicity of affairs hindered him from coming at all. 'T is only a few days since that he made me a visit, in company with Mr. Hamilton, before whom I did not think it proper to speak my complaints. They are now gone to drink the waters at Vicenza: when they return, I intend removing to Venice, and then shall relate my grievances, which I have more reason to do than ever. I have tired you with this disagreeable subject: I will release you, and please myself in repeating the assurance of my being ever, while I have a being, Your most affectionate mother,

M. WORTLEY.

My dear child, do not think of reversing nature by making me presents. I would send you all my jewels and my toilet, if I knew how to convey them, though they are in some measure necessary in this country, where it would be, perhaps, reported I had pawned them, if they did not sometimes make their appearance. I know not how to send commissions for things I

never saw; nothing of price I would have, as I would not new furnish an inn I was on the point of leaving, for such is this world to me. Though, china is in such high estimation here, I have sometimes an inclination to desire your father to send me the two large jars, that stood in the windows in Cavendish-square. I am sure he don't value them, and believe they would be of no use to you. I bought them at an auction, for two guineas, before the Duke of Argyle's example had made all china, more or less, fashionable.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Louvere, Sept. 30, 1757.

My dear Child,— Lord Bute has been so obliging as to let me know your safe delivery, and the birth of another daughter: may she be as meritorious in your eyes as you are in mine! I can wish nothing better to you both, though I have some reproaches to make you. Daughter! daughter! don't call names; you are always abusing my pleasures, which is what no mortal will bear. Trash, lumber, sad stuff, are the titles you give to my favorite amusement. If I called a white staff a stick of wood, a gold key gilded brass, and the ensigns of illustrious orders coloured strings, this may be philosophically true, but would be very ill received. We have all our playthings; happy are they that can be contented with those they can obtain: those hours are spent in the wisest manner, that can easiest shade the ills of life, and are the least productive of ill consequences. I think my time better employed in reading the adventures of imaginary people, than the Duchess of Marlborough, who passed the latter years of her life in paddling with her will, and contriving schemes of plaguing some, and extracting praise from others, to no purpose; eternally disappointed, and eternally fretting. The active scenes are over at my age. I indulge, with all the art I can, my taste for reading. If I would confine it to valuable books, they are almost as rare as valuable men. I must be content with what I can find. As I approach a second childhood, I endeavour to enter into the pleasures of it. Your youngest son is, perhaps, at this very moment riding on a poker, with great delight, not at all regretting that it is not a gold one and much less wishing it an Arabian horse, which he could not know how to manage. I am reading an idle tale, not expecting wit or truth in it, and am very glad it is not metaphysics to puzzle my judgement, or history to mislead my opinion. He fortifies his health by exercise; I calm my cares by oblivion. The methods may appear low to busy people; but

if he improves his strength, and I forget my infirmities, we both attain very desirable ends.

I have not heard from your father of a long time. I hope he is well, because you do not mention him.

I am ever, dear child, your most affectionate mother.

M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Padoua, Oct. 20, 1757.

I AM much obliged to you, my dear child, for the concern you express for me, in yours of July 10th,* which I received yesterday, August 20th, but I can assure you I lose very little in not being visited by the English; boys and governors being commonly (not always) the worst company in the world. I am not otherwise affected by it, than as it has an ill appearance in a strange country, though hitherto I have not found any bad effect from it, among my Venetian acquaintance. I was visited, two days ago, by my good friend Cavalier Antonio Mocenigo, who came from Venice to present to me the elected husband of his brother's great grand-daughter, who is a noble Venetian, (Signor Zeno,) just of her age, heir to a large fortune, and is one of the most agreeable figures I ever saw; not beautiful, but has an air of so much modesty and good sense, I could easily believe all the good Signor Antonio said of him. They came to invite me to the wedding. I could not refuse such a distinction, but hope to find some excuse before the solemnity, being unwilling to throw away money on fine clothes, which are as improper for me as an embroidered pall for a coffin. But I durst not mention age before my friend, who told me that he is eighty-six. I thought him forty years younger; he has all his senses perfect, and is as lively as a man of thirty. It was very pleasing to see the affectionate respect of the young man, and the fond joy that the old one took in praising him. They would have persuaded me to return with them to Venice; I objected that my house was not ready to receive me; Signor Antonio laughed, and asked me, if I did not think he could give me an apartment, (in truth it was very easy, having five palaces on a row, on the great canal, his own being the centre, aud the others inhabited by his relations). I was reduced to tell a fib, (God forgive me,) and pretend a pain in my head; promising to come to Venice before the marriage, which I really intend. They dined here; your health was the first drank; you may imagine I did not fail to toast the bride. She is yet in a convent, but is to be immediately released, and receive visits of

congratulation on the contract, till the celebration of the church ceremony, which perhaps may not be this two months; during which time the lover makes a daily visit, and never comes without a present which custom (at least sometimes) adds to the impatience of the bridegroom, and very much qualifies that of the lady. You would find it hard to believe a relation of the magnificence, not to say extravagance, on these occasions; indeed it is the only one they are guilt of, their lives in general being spent in a regular handsome economy; the weddings and the creation of a procurator being the only occasions they have of displaying their wealth, which is very great in many houses, particularly this of Mocenigo, of which my friend is the present head. I may justly call him so, giving me proofs of an attachment quite uncommon at London, and certainly disinterested, since I can no way possibly be of use to him. I could tell you some strong instances of it, if I did not remember you have not time to listen to my stories, and there is scarce room on my paper to assure you I am, my dear child,

Your most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Venice, Jan. 20, 1758.

I AM always glad to hear of my dear child's health, and daily pray for the continuance of it and all other blessings on you and your family. The carnival hitherto has been clouded by extremely wet weather, but we are in hopes that the sun-shine is reserved for the second part of it, when the morning masquerades give all the ladies an opportunity of displaying both their magnificence and their taste, in the various habits that appear at that time. I was very well diverted by them last year. I hear Rome is crammed with Britons, and suppose we shall see them all in their turns. I cannot say that the rising generation gives any general prospect of improvement either in the arts or sciences, or in any thing else. I am exceedingly pleased that the Duchess of Portland is happy in her son-in-law. I must ever interest myself in what happens to any descendant of Lady Oxford. I expect that my books and china should set out, they will be a great amusement to me; I mix so little with the gay world, and at present my garden is quite useless.

Venice is not a place to make a man's fortune in. As for those who have money to throw away, they may do it here more agreeably than in any town I know; strangers being received with great civility, and admitted into all their parties

of pleasure. But it requires a good estate and good constitution to play deep, and pass so many sleepless nights, as is customary in the best company.

I am invited to a great wedding to-morrow, which will be in the most splendid manner, to the contentment of both the families, every thing being equal, even the indifference of the bride and bridegroom, though each of them is extremely pleased, by being set free from governors or governesses. To say truth, I think they are less likely to be disappointed, in the plan they have formed, than any of our romantic couples, who have their heads full of love and constancy.

I stay here, though I am on many accounts better pleased with Padoua. Our great minister, the resident, affects to treat me as one in the opposition. I am inclined to laugh rather than be displeased at his political airs; yet, as I am among strangers, they are disagreeable; and, could I have foreseen them, would have settled in some other part of the world; but I have taken leases of my houses, been at much pains and expense in furnishing them, and am no longer at an age to make long journeys. I saw, some months ago, a countryman of yours, (Mr. Adam,(1)) who desires to be introduced to you. He seemed to me, in one short visit, to be a man of genius, and I have heard his knowledge of architecture much applauded. He is now in England.

Your account of the changes in ministerial affairs do not surprise me; but nothing could be more astonishing than their all coming in together. It puts me in mind of a friend of mine, who had a large family of favourite animals; and, not knowing how to convey them to his country-house in separate equipages, he ordered a Dutch mastiff, a cat and her kittens, a monkey, and a parrot, all to be packed up together in one large hamper, and sent by a waggon. One may easily guess how this set of company made their journey; and I have never been able to think of the present compound ministry without the idea of barking, scratching, and screaming.(2) 'T is too ridiculous a one I own for the gravity of their characters, and still more for the situation the kingdom is in; for, as much as one may encourage the love of laughter, 't is impossible to be indifferent to the welfare of one's native country.

Adieu! your affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

(1) Mr. Robert Adam, who built Caen-Wood, Luton-Park, etc. and the Adelphi in conjunction with his brother. His designs are published.

(2) This story has been versified by Lord Byron, (Don Juan canto 3rd, stanza 18,) but without any reference to the source from whence he drew it. Lady Mary introduces it with some point, to illustrate her notion

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Venice, April 3, 1758.

My dear Child,—Several English are expected here at the Ascension, and I hope to find an opportunity of sending you your pearl necklace. I have been persuaded to take a small house here, as living in lodgings is really very disagreeable. However, I shall still retain my favourite palace at Padoua, where I intend to reside the greater part of the year. In the mean time I amuse myself with buying and placing furniture, in which I only consult neatness and convenience, having long since renounced (as it is fit I should) all things bordering upon magnificence. I must confess I sometimes indulge my taste in baubles, which is as excusable in second childhood as in the first. I am sorry the Duchess of Portland has not received my thanks for her obliging letter. I also desire to know the name of the merchant, to whom the Duke consigned the legacy left me by lady Oxford. I see in the newspapers the names of many novels. I do not doubt, but that the greater part of them are trash, lumber, etc., etc.; however, they will serve to kill idle time. I have written you several letters lately; indeed I seldom fail to do it once in a fortnight. Unavoidable visits, together with the occupation of fitting and furnishing, hardly leaves any time to dispose of to my own taste, which is (as it ought to be) more solitary than ever. I left my hermitage, (at Louvere,) that what effects I have might not be dissipated by servants, as they would have been, had I died there.

Sir J. Gray was, as I am told, universally esteemed, during his residence here; but alas! he is gone to Naples. I wish the maxims of Queen Elizabeth were received, who always chose men whose birth or behaviour would make the nation respected, people being apt to look upon them as a sample of their countrymen. If those now employed are so—Lord have

of the good understanding which might be expected to exist among the members of an administration composed of very discordant materials; Lord Byron, to describe the indifference and cruelty of a corsair.

His lines are these:

A monkey, a Dutch mastiff, a mackaw,
Two parrots, with a Persian cat and kittens,
He chose from several animals he saw;
A terrier, too, which once had been a Briton's,
Who, dying on the coast of Ithaca,
The peasants gave the poor dumb thing a pittance:
These to secure in this strong blowing weather,
He caged in one large hamper all together.

mercy upon us! I have seen only Mr. Villette, at Turin, who knew how to support his character. How much the nation has suffered by false intelligence, I believe you are very sensible of; and how impossible it is to obtain truth either from a fool or a knave.

Company forces me upon an abrupt conclusion. I am ever, my dear child, etc., etc. M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Venice, 1758.

DEAR CHILD,—I received yours of the 20th of Feb. yesterday, May the 2d, so irregular is the post. I could forgive the delay, but I cannot pardon the loss of so many that have never arrived at all. Mr. Hamilton is not yet come, nor perhaps will not for some months. I hear he is at Leghorn. General Graham has been dangerously ill; but I am told he is now on his return. We have at present the most extravagant weather that has been know for some years; it is as cold and wet as an English November. Thursday next is the ceremony of the Ascension: the show will be entirely spoilt if the rain continues, to the serious affliction of the fine ladies, who all make new clothes on that occasion. We have had lately two magnificent weddings; Lord Mandeville(1) had the pleasure of dancing at one of them. I appeared at neither, being formal balls, where no masks were admitted, and all people set out in high dress, which I have long renounced, as it is very fit I should; though there were several grandmothers there, who exhibited their jewels. In this country nobody grows old till they are bed-rid.

I wish your daughters to resemble me in nothing but the love of reading, knowing, by experience, how far it is capable of softening the cruelest accidents of life; even the happiest cannot be passed over without many uneasy hours; and there is no remedy so easy as books, which, if they do not give cheerfulness, at least restore quiet to the most troubled mind. Those that fly to cards or company for relief, generally find they only exchange one misfortune for another.

You have so much business on your hands, I will not take you from more proper employment by a long letter. I am, my dear child, with the warmest affection, ever your tender mother,

M. WORTLEY.

(1) George Viscount Mandeville, eldest son of Robert Duke of Manchester.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

May 29, 1758.—Padoua.

My dear Child,—My last letter was wrote in such a fright, I do not remember one word I said; and I presume you could make nothing out of it; I am now restored to my usual calmness of mind, and hope I was more afraid than hurt, being assured (I think from good hands) that my civility to a distressed lady and gentleman can no way be an injury to you, or give any suspicion of my being engaged in an interest that was always foreign both to my principles and inclination. You mention the letter you received from Mr. Law, but say nothing of his pupil, Mr. Oliver, who, if his estate be so large as I am told, may be worthy the regard of my grand-daughters, being a generous good-natured man, and willing to do right whenever he sees it. Mr. Pitt is obliged to him, having had high words with Murray upon his account. I did not charge him with my letter, suspecting the carelessness incident to youth, tho' I no way mistrusted his integrity. But as they proposed staying some time in Germany, I did not send my token to you by either of them, expecting many English this Ascension. But, by the political contrivances of our great minister, I have seen few, and those in such a cool way, that I did not think it proper to ask a favour. I mentioned it to Lord Mandeville, and Col. Otway, who travels with him; they promised to wait on me for it, but left the town suddenly; on which I heard lamented the slavery the young nobility were under to formal governors, and easily guessed the reasons for their departure.

I am afraid you may think some imprudent behaviour of mine has occasioned all this ridiculous persecution; I can assure you I have always treated him and his family with the utmost civility, and am now retired to Padoua, to avoid the comments that will certainly be made on his extraordinary conduct towards me. I only desire privacy and quiet, and am very well contented to be without visits, which oftener disturb than amuse me. My single concern is the design he has formed of securing (as he calls it) my effects immediately on my decease; if they ever fall into his hands, I am persuaded they will never arrive entire into yours, which is a very uneasy thought to, dear child, your most affectionate mother, M. Wortley.

My blessing to all yours, and compliments to Lord Bute.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Padoua, July 17, 1758.

My dear Child,—I received yours last night, which gave me a pleasure beyond what I am able to express, (this is not according to the common expression, but a simple truth). I had not heard from you for some months, and was in my heart very uneasy, from the apprehension of some misfortune in your family; though, as I always endeavour to avoid the anticipation of evil, which is a source of pain, and can never be productive of any good, I stifled my fear as much as possible, yet it cost me many a midnight pang. You have been the passion of my life; you need thank me for nothing; I gratify myself whenever I can oblige you. I have already given into the hands of Mr. Anderson a long letter for you, but it is now of so old a date, I accompany it with another. His journey has been delayed by a very extraordinary accident, which might have proved as fatal as that of Lord Drumlanrigh, or that, which I think worse, which happened to my convert Mr. Butler; fortunately it has only served to set the characters of both the governor and the pupil in a more amiable light. Mr. Archer was at breakfast with six other English gentlemen, and handling a blunderbuss, which he did not know to be charged, it burst, and distributed among them six chained bullets, beside the splinters, which flew about in the manner you may imagine. His own hand was considerably wounded, yet the first word he spoke (without any regard to his own smart or danger) was, "I hope nobody is hurt:"—nobody was hurt but himself, who has been ever since under cure, to preserve two of his fingers which were very much torn. He had also a small razure on his cheek, which is now quite healed. The paternal care and tenderness Mr. Anderson has shown on this occasion, has recommended him to every body. I wanted nothing to raise that esteem which is due to his sterling honesty and good heart, which I do not doubt you value as much as I do. If that wretch Hickman had been——but this is a melancholy thought, and as such ought to be suppressed.

How important is the charge of youth! and how useless all the advantages of nature and fortune without a well-turned mind! I have lately heard of a very shining instance of this truth, from two gentlemen, (very deserving ones they seem to be,) who have had the curiosity to travel into Muscovy, and now return to England with Mr. Archer. I inquired after my old acquaintance Sir Charles Williams, who I hear is much broken, both in his spirits and constitution. How happy might

that man have been, if there had been added to his natural and acquired endowments a dash of morality! If he had known how to distinguish between false and true felicity; and, instead of seeking to encrease an estate already too large, and hunting after pleasures that have made him rotten and ridiculous, he had bounded his desires of wealth, and followed the dictates of his conscience. His servile ambition has gained him two yards of red ribbon, and an exile into a miserable country, where there is no society and so little taste, that I believe he suffers under a dearth of flatterers. This is said for the use of your growing sons, whom I hope no golden temptations will induce to marry women they cannot love, or comply with measures they do not approve. All the happiness this world can afford is more within reach than is generally supposed. Whoever seeks pleasure will undoubtedly find pain; whoever will pursue ease will as certainly find pleasures. The world's esteem is the highest gratification of human vanity; and that is more easily obtained in a moderate fortune than an overgrown one, which is seldom possessed, never gained, without envy. I say esteem; for, as to applause it is a youthful pursuit, never to be forgiven after twenty, and naturally succeeds the childish desire of catching the setting sun, which I can remember running very hard to do: a fine thing truly if it could be caught; but experience soon shows it to be impossible. A wise and honest man lives to his own heart, without that silly splendour that makes him a prey to knaves, and which commonly ends in his becoming one of the fraternity. I am very glad to hear Lord Bute's decent economy sets him above any thing of that kind. I wish it may become national. A collective body of men differs very little from a single man; and frugality is the foundation of generosity. I have often been complimented on the English heroism, who have thrown away so many millions, without any prospect of advantage to themselves, purely to succour a distressed Princess. I never could hear these praises without some impatience; they sounded to me like the panegyrics made by the dependants on the Duke of Newcastle and poor Lord Oxford, bubbled when they were commended, and laughed at when they were undone. Some late events will, I hope, open our eyes: we shall see we are an island, and endeavour to extend our commerce rather than the Quixote reputation of redressing wrongs and placing diadems on heads that should be equally indifferent to us. When time has ripened mankind into common sense, the name of conqueror will be an odious title. I could easily prove that, had the Spaniards established a trade with the Americans, they would have en-

richeɾ their country more than by the addition of twenty-two kingdoms, and all the mines they now work—I do not say possess; since, though they are the proprietors, others enjoy the profit.

My letter is too long; I beg your pardon for it; 'tis seldom I have an opportunity of speaking to you, and I would have you know all the thcughts of your most affectionate mother,

M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Padoua, July 14, 1758.

MY DEAR CHILD,—I hope this will find you in perfect health. I had a letter from your father last post, dated from Newbold, which tells me a very agreeable piece of news, that the contests of parties, so violent formerly, (to the utter destruction of peace, civility, and common sense,) are so happily terminated, that there is nothing of that sort mentioned in good company. I think I ought to wish you and my grand-children joy on this general pacification, when I remember all the vexation I have gone through, from my youth upwards, on the account of those divisions, which touched me no more than the disputes between the followers of Mahomet and Ali, being always of opinion that politics and controversy were as unbecoming to our sex as the dress of a prize-fighter; and I would as soon have mounted Fig's theatre as have stewed all night in the gallery of a committee, as some ladies of bright parts have done.

Notwithstanding the habitual (I believe I might say natural) indifference, here am I involved in adventures, as surprising as any related in Amadis de Gaul, or even by Mr. Glanville. (1) I can assure you I should not be more surprised at seeing myself riding in the air on a broom-stick, than in the figure of a first rate politician. You will stare to hear that your nurse keeps her corner (as Lord Bolingbroke says of Miss Oglethorp) in this illustrious conspiracy. I really think the best head of the junto is an English washerwoman, who has made her fortune with all parties, by her compliance in changing her religion, which gives her the merit of a new convert; and her charitable disposition, of keeping a house of fair reception, for the English captains, sailors, etc., that are distressed, by long sea voyages, (as Sir Samson Legend remarks, in Love for Love,) gains her friends among all public spirited people: the scenes

(1) In his History of Witchcraft,—Sadducismus Triumphans 1681.

are so comic, they deserve the pen of a Richardson to do them justice. I begin to be persuaded the surest way of preserving reputation, and having powerful protectors, is being openly lewd and scandalous. I will not be so censorious, to take examples from my own sex; but you see Doctor Swift, who set at defiance all decency, truth, or reason, had a crowd of admirers, and at their head the virtuous and ingenious Earl of Orrery, the polite and learned Mr. Greville, with a number of ladies of fine taste and unblemished characters; while the Bishop of Salisbury, (Burnet I mean,) the most indulgent parent, the most generous church-man, and the most zealous asserter of the rights and liberties of his country, was all his life defamed and vilified, and after his death most barbarously calumniated, for having had the courage to write a history without flattery. I knew him in my very early youth, and his condescension, in directing a girl in her studies, is an obligation I can never forget.

Apropos of obligations; I hope you remember yours to Lady Knatchbull. (1) Her only son is here; his father has been dead nine years; he gave me the first news of it, (so little do I know of what passes amongst my acquaintance.) I made him the bad compliment of receiving him with tears in my eyes, and told him bluntly I was extremely sorry for the loss of so good a friend, without reflecting that it was telling him I was sorry he was in possession of his estate; however, he did not seem offended, but rather pleased at the esteem I expressed for his parents. I endeavoured to repair my blunder by all the civilities in my power, and was very sincere in saying I wished him well, for the sake of his dead and living relations. He appears to me to be what the Duke of Kingston was at Thorsby, though more happy in his guardian and governor. The gentleman who is with him is a man of sense, and I believe has his pupil's interest really at heart; but, there is so much pains taken to make him despise instruction, I fear he will not long resist the allurements of pleasures, which his constitution cannot support.

Here is great joy in the nomination of Mr. Mackenzie for Turin; his friends hoping to see him on his journey. My token for you lies dormant, and is likely so to do some time. None of the English have visited me, (excepting Sir Wyndham Knatchbull,) or in so cold a way that it would be highly improper to ask favours of them. He is going to Rome; and it

(1) Sir Wyndham Knatchbull, of Mersham-Hatch, in Kent, succeeded his father in 1749, and died, unmarried, September 26, 1763. His mother was Catharine, daughter of James Harris, of Salisbury, Esq.

may be, I may be obliged to wait till he returns, next Ascension, before I have an opportunity of conveying it. Such is the behaviour of my loving countrymen!—in recompense I meet with much friendship amongst the noble Venetians, perhaps the more from being no favourite of a man they dislike. It is the peculiar glory of Mr. Mackenzie that the whole Sardinian court rejoice in the expectation of his arrival, notwithstanding they have been very well pleased with Lord Bristol. To say truth, they are the only young men I have seen abroad, that have found the secret of introducing themselves into the best company. All the others now living here, (however dignified and distinguished,) by herding together, and throwing away their money on worthless objects, have only acquired the glorious title of Golden Asses; and, since the birth of the Italian drama, Goldoni has adorned his scenes with *gli milordi Inglesi*, in the same manner as Molière represented his Parisian Marquises. If your agreeable brother-in-law is still at London I desire you would wish him joy in my name. If it be no trouble to him, you may take that occasion of sending me some books, particularly two small volumes lately written by Mr. Horace Walpole. (1) My dear child, I ask your pardon for the intolerable length of this trifling letter. You know age is tattling, and something should be forgiven to the sincere affection with which I am ever,

Your most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Oct. 31, 1758.

MY DEAR CHILD,—I received yours of Oct. 2nd this day the 31st instant. The death of the two great ladies you mention, I believe does not occasion much sorrow; they have long been burthens (not to say nuisances) on the face of the earth. I am sorry for Lord Carlisle. (2) He was my friend as well as acquaintance, and a man of uncommon probity and good nature. I think he has shown it in the disposition of his will in the favour of a lady he had no reason to esteem. It is certainly the kindest thing he could do for her, to endeavour to save her from her own folly, which would have probably precipitately hurried her into a second marriage, which would most surely have revenged all her misdemeanors.

I was well acquainted with Mr. Walpole, at Florence, and

(1) Royal and Noble Authors, 8vo. 1758.
(2) He died September 4, 1758.

indeed he was particularly civil to me. I am encouraged to to ask a favour of him, if I did not know, that few people have so good memories as to remember, so many years backwards as have passed since I have seen him. If he has treated the character of Queen Elizabeth with disrespect, all the women should tear him in pieces, for abusing the glory of her sex. (1) Neither is it just to put her in the list of authors, having never published any thing, though we have Mr. Camden's authority, that she wrote many valuable pieces, chiefly translations from the Greek. I wish all monarchs would bestow their leisure hours on such studies: perhaps they would not be very useful to mankind; but it may be asserted, as a certain truth, that their own minds would be more improved than by the amusements of Quadrille or Cavagnole.

I desire you would thank your father for the china jars; if they arrive safely, they will do me great honour in this country. The Patriarch died here lately. He had a large temporal estate; and, by long life and extreme parsimony, has left four hundred thousand sequins in his coffers, which is inherited by two nephews; and I suppose will be dissipated as scandalously as it was accumulated. The town is full of faction, for the election of his successor; and the ladies are always very active on these occasions. I have observed that they have ever had more influence in republics than in a monarchy. 'T' is true, a king has often a powerful mistress, but she is governed by some male favourite. In commonwealths, votes are easily acquired by the fair; and she, who has most beauty or art, has a great sway in the senate. I run on troubling you with stories very insignificant to you, and taking up your time, which I am very certain is taken up in matters of more importance than my old wives' tales. My dear child, God bless you and yours, I am, with the warmest sentiments of my heart, your most affectionate mother,

M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Padoua, Nov. 19, 1758.

MY DEAR CHILD,—I am glad to hear Lady Betty Mackenzie is so amiable. I have dined with her at the Duke of Argyll's, and seen her several times, but she was then of an age when young ladies think silence becoming in the presence of their parents. Lady Mary, (2) hardly passed her chilhood, was more

(1) Alluding to the character of Queen Elizabeth, in his Royal and Noble Authors.

(2) Lady Mary Coke.

free, and I confess was my favourite in the family. The rejoicings in this town, for the election of the Pope, (1) who was archbishop of this city, are not yet over, and have been magnificent to the last degree; the illuminations, fire-works, and assemblies, have been finer than any known of many years. I have had no share in them, going to bed at the hour they begun. —It is remarkable that the present Pope (2) has his mother still living, at Venice; his father died only last winter. If he follows the steps of his predecessor, he will be a great blessing to his dominions. I could, with pleasure to myself, enlarge on the character of the deceased prelate, which was as extraordinary as that of the Czar Peter, being equally superior to the prejudices of education, but you would think me bribed by the civilities I received from him. I had the honour of a most obliging message, by his particular order, the post before that which brought news of his death.

I am not surprised you are not much delighted with Lady Irwin's conversation; yet, on the whole, I think her better than many other women; I am persuaded there is no blackness in her heart. Lord Carlisle was the most intimate friend of my father,—they were of the same age—and, if he had not been dedicated to retirement, would have been one of the Duke of Kingston's guardians; and I firmly believe would have acted in a different manner from those who were intrusted, being (with all his failings) a man of great honour. I was early acquainted with his daughters, and, giving way to the vanity and false pretensions of Lady Irwin, always lived well with her. It was possible to laugh at her but impossible to be angry with her. I never saw any malice in her composition. A court life may have altered her; but when I saw her last (a few weeks before I left London), she was the same as I knew her at Castle-Howard. I tire you with these old wives' tales, and will put an end to my dull epistle by the sincere assurance of my being your affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

I AM very glad, my dear child, to hear of your father's health; mine is better than I ought to expect at my time of life. I believe Mr. Anderson talks partially of me, as to my looks; I know nothing of the matter, as it is eleven years since I have seen my

(1) Upon the death of Cardinal Lambertini, Benedict XIV.
(2) Cardinal Rezzonico, Clement XIII.

figure in a glass, and the last reflection I saw there was so disagreeable, that I resolved to spare myself such mortifications for the future, and shall continue that resolution to my life's end. To indulge all pleasing amusements, and avoid all images that give disgust, is in my opinion the best method to attain or confirm health.—I ought to consider yours, and shorten my letter, while you are in a condition that makes reading uneasy to you.

God bless you and yours, my dear child, is the most ardent wish of your affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

TO MR. WORTLEY.

Venice, Dec. 11, 1758.

I ASSURE you I live as agreeably here as any stranger in my circumstances possibly can do; and, indeed, a repetition of all the civilities I have received here would sound more like vanity than truth. I am sensible that I owe a great part of them to Grimani, who is in the first esteem and authority in this republic; and, as he takes pains to appear my friend, his relations and allies, of both sexes, (who are the most considerable people here,) endeavour to oblige me in all sorts of ways. The carnival is expected to be more brilliant than common, from the great concourse of noble strangers. The Princess of Holstein and the Prince of Wolfenbuttle (nephew of the Empress) are already arrived, and the Electoral Prince of Saxony is expected next week. If my age and humour would permit me much pleasure in public amusements, here are a great variety of them. I take as little share of them as I can.

"Frui paratis et valido mihi
Latoe dones, et precor integrâ
Cum mente, nec turpem senectam
Degere, nec citharâ carentem."

HOR. *Od.* L. 1. O. 31.

You see I have got a Horace, which is borrowed of the Consul, who is a good scholar; but I am very impatient for my own books. I could wish you to send me the cushions that were used at Constantinople; they would be very useful to me here. As to what regards ——, I have long since fixed my opinion concerning him. Indeed, I am not insensible of the misfortune, but I look upon it as the loss of a limb, which should cease to give solicitude by being irretrievable.

Lord Brudenel (1) is here, and appears to be in an extremely

(1) John Lord Brudenel, eldest son of George Earl of Cardigan.

bad state of health, and unwilling to return to England, being apprehensive of the air. I fear his friends will have the affliction of losing him, as he seems highly disposed, if not actually fallen into a consumption. I have had a letter from Mr. Mackensie, who is excessively liked at Turin. I cannot contrive to go there, but heartily wish I could contrive to see him and Lady Betty in some other place. I am determined on account of my health, to take some little jaunt next spring; perhaps on the side of the Tyrol, which I have never seen, but hear it is an exceedingly fine country. To say truth, I am tempted by the letters of Lady F. Stewart and Sir James. I never knew people more to my taste. They reside in a little town, only two days' journey from Padoua, where it will be easy to find a lodging for the summer months, and I am sure of being pleased in their company. I have found, wherever I have travelled, that the pleasantest spots of ground have been in the vallies, which are encompassed with high mountains.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Dec. 5, 1758.

My dear Child,—I have now been two posts without answering yours of Nov. 6, having my head too muddled to write; (don't laugh at me if you can help it) but it really has been occasioned by the vexation arising from the impudence of Dodsley, whom I never saw, and never mentioned or thought of in my life. I know you will tell me that in my situation I ought to be as indifferent to what is said of me at London as in Pekin; but——I will talk no more on this disagreeable subject.

The fine ladies I spoke of, I hear, are at Paris, and perhaps may find reason for staying there. We have lately a very agreeable English family here, a Mr. Wright, many of whose relations I know and esteem in England. His lady is niece to Lord Westmoreland. She is a very pretty sensible young woman. The union between her and her spouse put me in mind of yours with Lord Bute. They have been stop'd here by her lying-in, unfortunately, of a dead child; but are preparing for Rome and Naples; and from thence design to return home. I think I may recommend her acquaintance to you, as one that you will be pleased with, and need not fear repenting. Their conversation is the greatest pleasure I have here. I have reason to applaud their good nature, who seem to forget I am an old woman; the tour they propose is so long you may probably not see them this two year. I am told Mr. Mackensie is

arrived at Turin with Lady Betty. I wish heartily to see them, but am afraid it is impossible. They cannot quit that capital, and the journey is too long for me to undertake. Neither do I desire to visit a town where I have so many acquaintance, and have been so well received. I could not decently refuse civilities that would draw me into a crowd as displeasing to me at present, as it would have been delightful at fifteen. Indeed there is no great city so proper for the retreat of old age as Venice; where we have not the *embarras* of a court; no devoirs to force us into public; and yet (which you'll think extraordinary) we may appear there without being ridiculous. This is a privilege I do not often make use of, but am not sorry to have it in my power to hear an opera without the mortification of showing a wrinkled face.

I hope you will not forget to send me the bill of loading, without which I run a risk of losing whatever is sent by sea. I am very fond of the jars, which I look upon as a present from your father. I am ever, my dearest child,

Your most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

Dec. 5, 1758.

My blessing to all yours, and compliments to Lord Bute.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Venice, Feb. 21, 1759.

MY DEAR CHILD,—If half the letters I have sent to you have reached you, I believe you think I have always a pen in my hand; but, I am really so uneasy, by your long silence, I cannot forbear inquiring the reason of it, by all the methods I can imagine. My time of life is naturally inclined to fear; and though I resist (as well as I can) all the infirmities incident to age, I feel but too sensibly the impressions of melancholy, when I have any doubt of your welfare. You fancy, perhaps, that the public papers give me information enough; and that when I do not see in them any misfortune of yours, I ought to conclude you have none. I can assure you I never see any, excepting by accident. Our resident has not the good breeding to send them to me; and after having asked for them once or twice, and being told they were engaged, I am unwilling to demand a trifle at the expense of thanking a man who does not desire to oblige me; indeed, since the ministry of Mr. Pitt, he is so desirous to signalize his zeal for the contrary faction, he is perpetually saying ridiculous things, to manifest his attachment; and, as he looks upon me (nobody knows why) to be the

friend of a man I never saw, he has not visited me once this winter. The misfortune is not great. I cannot help laughing at my being mistaken for a politician. I have often been so, though I ever thought politics far removed from my sphere. I cannot accuse myself of dabbling in them, even when I heard them talked over in all companies; but, as the old song says,

Tho' through the wide world we should range,
'T is in vain from our fortune to fly.

I forget myself and tattle on, without remembering you are too much employed to throw away time on reading insignificant letters; you should however forgive them, in consideration of the real affection of your very loving mother, M. WORTLEY.

TO MR. WORTLEY.

Venice, Feb. 24, 1759.

I RETURN you many thanks for yours of the 5th instant. I never have received any in so short a time from England. I am very sincerely, heartily, glad to hear of your health, but will not trouble you with reading a long letter, which may be uneasy to you, when I write so often and fully to our daughter. I have not heard from her of some time; I hope her silence is not occasioned by any indisposition. I hear her and her family praised very much by every Briton that arrives here. I need not say what comfort I receive from it. It is now finer weather than I ever saw in the season, (Naples excepted): the sun shines with as much warmth as in May. I walk in my little garden every morning. I hope you do the same at Bath.

The carnival is now over and we have no more ridotto or theatrical amusements. Diversions have taken a more private, perhaps a more agreeable, turn here. It is the fashion to have little houses of retreat, where the lady goes every evening, at seven or eight o'clock, and is visited by all her intimates of both sexes, which commonly amount to seventy or eighty persons, where they have play, concerts of music, sometimes dancing, and always a handsome collation. I believe you will think these little assemblies very pleasing; they really are so. Whoever is well acquainted with Venice must own that it is the centre of pleasure; not so noisy, and, in my opinion, more refined than Paris. The young Earl of Northampton is now at Florence, and was here in the carnival. He is lively and good natured, with what is called a pretty figure. I believe he is of a humour likely to fall in love with many; the first agreeable girl

he meets with in London.(1) I send this by a gentleman who is just returned from making a very extraordinary journey. I dined with him yesterday at General Graham's. He is a sensible man, and gives a good account of his plan. Almost all books are either defective or fabulous. I have observed, that the only true intelligence of distant countries is to be had from those who have passed them, without a design of publishing their remarks.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Venice, May 22, 1759.

My dear Child,— I am always pleased to hear from you, but particularly so when I have any occasion of congratulation. I sincerely wish you joy of your infants having gone happily through the small-pox. I had a letter from your father before he left London. He does not give so good an account of his spirits as you do, but I hope his journeys will restore them. I am convinced nothing is so conducive to health and absolutely necessary to some constitutions. I am not surprised, as I believe you think I ought to be at Lord Leicester's(2) leaving his large estate to his lady, notwithstanding the contempt with which he always treated her, and her real inability of managing it. I expect you should laugh at me, for the exploded notion of predestination, yet I confess I am inclined to be of the opinion, that nobody makes their own marriage or their own will: it is what I have often said to the Duchess of Marlborough, when she has been telling me her last intentions, none of which she has performed; choosing Lord Chesterfield for her executor, whose true character she has many times enlarged upon. I could say much more to support this doctrine, if it would not lengthen my letter beyond a readable size.

Building is the general weakness of old people; I have had a twitch of it myself, though certainly it is the highest absurdity, and as sure a proof of dotage as pink coloured ribands, or even matrimony. Nay, perhaps, there is more to be said in defence of the last, I mean in a childless old man; he may prefer a boy born in his own house, though he knows it is not his own, to disrespectful or worthless nephews or nieces. But

(1) He married Lady Anne Somerset, eldest daughter of Charles Noel, Duke of Beaufort.

(2) Sir Thomas Coke, K. B. created Baron Lovell 1728, and Viscount Coke and Earl of Leicester 1744, died 1749. His lady was Margaret, third daughter and co-heir of Thomas, Earl of Thanet, and in 1734 was declared Baroness Clifford.

there is no excuse for beginning an edifice he can never inhabit, or probably see finished. The Duchess of Marlborough used to ridicule the vanity of it, by saying one might always live upon other people's follies: yet you see she built the most ridiculous house I ever saw, since it really is not habitable, from the excessive damps; so true it is, the things that we would do, those do we not, and the things we would not do, those do we daily. I feel in myself a proof of this assertion, being much against my will at Venice, though I own it is the only great town where I can properly reside, yet here I find so many vexations, that, in spite of all my philosophy, and (what is more powerful,) my phlegm, I am oftner out of humour than among my plants and poultry in the country. I cannot help being concerned at the success of iniquitous schemes, and grieve for oppressed merit. You, who see these things every day, think me as unreasonable, in making them matter of complaint, as if I seriously lamented the change of seasons. You should consider I have lived almost a hermit ten years, and the world is as new to me as to a country girl transported from Wales to Coventry. I know I ought to think my lot very good, that can boast of some sincere friends among strangers.

Sir Wyndham Knatchbull and his governor, Mr. de Vismes, are at length parted. I am very sorry for them both. I cannot help wishing well to the young man, who really has merit, and would have been happy in a companion that sincerely loved him and studied his interest. My letter is so long I am frighted at it myself. I never know when to end when I write to you. Forgive it amongst the other infirmities of your affectionate mother,

M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Padoua, June 14, 1759.

MY DEAR CHILD,—I have this minute received yours of May 24. I am glad the little picture pleases Lady Mary. It is a true representation of the summer dishabille of the Venetian ladies. I could heartily wish to see your brother-in-law and Lady Betty Mackenzie, and fancy that I have a thousand questions to ask them, in relation to their nephews and nieces. Whatever touches you is important to me. I fear I must not expect that satisfaction, as they are obliged to reside at Turin; and I cannot resolve to appear in a court, where old people always make an ill figure, even though they may have business there.

Lord Fordwich (1) is arrived here; he made me a visit yesterday, and appears a well-disposed youth. Lord Brudenel continues here, and seems to have no desire to revisit his native land. I suppose you are now at Kew, with all your rising family around you: may they ever be blessings to you! I believe you who see them every day scarcely think more of them than I do.

This town is at present very full of company, though the opera is not much applauded. I have not yet seen it, nor do I intend to break my rest for its sake; it being about the hour I go to sleep. I continue my college-hours, by which custom I am excluded from many fashionable amusements; but, in recompense, I have better health and spirits than many younger ladies, who pass their nights at the ridotto, and days in spleen for their losses there. Play is the general plague of Europe. I know no corner of it entirely free from the infection. I do not doubt but that the familiarities of the gaming-table contribute very much to that decay of politeness of which you complain; for the pouting and quarrels, which naturally arise from disputes there, must put an end to all complaisance, or even good will towards each other.

I am interrupted by a visit from Mr. Hamilton; he desires me to make his compliments to you and Lord Bute. I am to you both A most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Padoua, Aug. 10, 1759.

MY DEAR CHILD,—There are preparations, at Venice, for a regatta: it can hardly be performed till the middle of next month. I shall remove thither to see it, though I have already seen that which was exhibited in compliment to the Prince of Saxony. It is by far the finest sight in Europe, (not excepting our own coronations,) and it is hardly possible to give you a just notion of it, by description. General Graham has shown me a letter from Lord Bute, very obliging to me, and which gives a very good impression both of his head and heart, from the honest resolutions and just reflections that are in it. My time here is entirely employed in riding, walking, and reading. I see little company, not being in a humour to join in their diversions. I feel greatly the loss of Sir James Stuart and Lady Fanny, whose conversation was equally pleas-

(1) George Nassau Clavering Cowper, afterwards Earl Cowper, born 26th August 1738, and died at Florence 1789.

ing and instructive. I do not expect to have it soon replaced, as there are few such couples. One of my best friends, at Venice, I believe your father remembers. He is Signor Antonio Mocenigo, widower of that celebrated beauty, the Procuratesa Mocenigo, and is eighty-two, in perfect health and spirits. His eloquence is much admired in the senate, where he has great weight. He still retains a degree of that figure, which once made him esteemed as one of the handsomest men in the republic. I am particularly proud of being admitted into the number of seven or eight friends, nearly of his own age, who pass their evenings with him.

God bless you, my dear child. Pray make my compliments to Lord Bute, and return him thanks for the kind manner in which he has mentioned me to the General. I am ever

Your affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

MY DEAR CHILD,—Since you tell me my letters (such as they are) are agreeable to you, I shall for the future indulge myself in thinking upon paper when I write to you.

I cannot believe Sir John's (1) advancement is owing to his merit, tho' he certainly deserves such a distinction; but I am persuaded the present disposers of such dignities are neither more clearsighted, or more disinterested than their predecessors. Ever since I knew the world, Irish patents have been hung out to sale, like the laced and embroidered coats in Monmouth-street, and bought up by the same sort of people; I mean those who had rather wear shabby finery than no finery at all; though I don't suppose this was Sir John's case. That *good creature*, (as the country saying is,) has not a bit of pride about him. I dare swear he purchased his title for the same reason he used to purchase pictures in Italy; not because

(1) In Mr. Dallaway's edition this and the preceding letter are joined together, and make one, It may be doubted whether this, which bears the date as above, should not have been inserted in an earlier part of this correspondence, as having been written in 1752; the "Sir John" mentioned in it having probably been Sir John Rawdon, Bart., who was created an Irish Peer, April 9th, 1750, by the title of Baron Rawdon of Moira. He was thrice married,—first, in 1741, to Lady Helena Percival, daughter of the Earl of Egmont; secondly, to Ann, daughter of Trevor Viscount Hillsborough; thirdly, in 1752, to Lady Elizabeth Hastings, eldest daughter of Theophilus, Earl of Huntingdon, 26th February 1752. December 15th, 1761, he was advanced in the peerage as Earl of Moira, in the county of Down.

he wanted to buy, but because somebody or other wanted to sell. He hardly ever opened his mouth but to say "What you please, sir;"—"Your humble servant;" or some gentle expression to the same effect. It is scarce credible that with this unlimited complaisance he should draw a blow upon himself; yet it so happened that one of his own countrymen was brute enough to strike him. As it was done before many witnesses, Lord Mansel heard of it; and thinking that, if poor Sir John took no notice of it, he would suffer daily insults of the same kind, out of pure good nature resolved to spirit him up, at least to some show of resentment, intending to make up the matter afterwards in as honorable a manner as he could for the poor patient. He represented to him very warmly that no gentleman could take a box on the ear. Sir John answered with great calmness, "I know that, but this was not a box on the ear, it was only a slap o' the face."

I was as well acquainted with his two first wives, as the difference of our ages permitted. I fancy they have broke their hearts by being chained to such a companion. 'Tis really terrible, for a wellbred virtuous young woman to be confined to the conversation of the object of her contempt. There is but one thing to be done in that case, which is a method I am sure you have observed practised with success by some ladies I need not name: they associate the husband and the lap-dog, and manage so well, that they make exactly the same figure in the family. My lord and *Dell* tag after madam to all indifferent places, and stay at home together, whenever she goes into company where they would be troublesome.——I can assure you I equally contemn a woman who can forget she was born a gentlewoman, for the sake of money she did not want. That is indeed the only sentiment that deserves the name of avarice. A prudential care of our affairs, or (to go farther) a desire of being in circumstances to be useful to our friends, is not only excusable but highly laudable; never blamed but by those who would persuade others to throw away their money, in hopes to pick up a share of it. The greatest declaimers for disinterestedness I ever knew, have been capable of the vilest actions; and the greatest instances of true generosity, given by those who were regular in their expences, and superior to the vanity of fashion.

I believe you are heartily tired of my dull moralities. I confess I am in very low spirits; it is hotter weather than has been known for some years, and I have got an abominable cold, which has drawn after it a troop of complaints I will not trouble you with reciting. I hope all your family are in good health,

I am humble servant to Lord Bute, I give my blessing to your children, and am ever your most affectionate mother,

June 22d, N. S. M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Genoa, Dec. 8, 1759.

MY DEAR CHILD,—I received yours, of October 24, yesterday, which gave me great pleasure, by the account of the good health of you and yours; I need not say how near that is to my heart. I had the satisfaction of an entertaining letter from your father, out of Germany, by which I find he has had both benefit and amusement from his travels. I hope he is now with you.

I find you have many wrong notions of Italy, which I do not wonder at. You can take your ideas of it only from books or travellers; the first are generally antiquated or confined to trite observations, and the other yet more superficial; they return no more instructed than they might have heen at home, by the help of a map. The boys only remember where they met with the best wine or the prettiest women; and the governors (I speak of the most learned amongst them) have only remarked situations and distances, or, at most, statues and edifices, as every girl that can read a French novel, and boy that can construe a scene in Terence, fancies they have attained to the French and Latin languages, when, God knows, it requires the study of a whole life to acquire a perfect knowledge of either of them: so, after a tour (as they call it) of three years, round Europe, people think themselves qualified to give exact accounts of the customs, politics, and interest of the dominions they have gone through post; when a very long stay, a diligent inquiry, and a nice observation are requisite even to a moderate degree of knowing a foreign country, especially here, where they are naturally very reserved. France indeed is more easily seen through; the French always talking of themselves, and the government being the same, there is little difference from one province to another; but, in Italy, the different laws make different customs and manners. There are many things very particular here, from the singularity of the government; some of which I do not care to touch upon, and some are still in use here, though obsolete in almost all other places, as the estates of all the great families being unalienable, as they were formerly in England. This would have made them very potent, if it were not balanced by another law, that divides whatever land the father dies possessed of among all the

sons, the eldest having no advantage, but the finest house and best furniture, which occasions numerous branches and few large fortunes, with a train of consequences you may imagine. But I cannot let pass in silence the prodigious alteration, since Misson's writing, in regard to our sex. This reformation (or, if you please, depravation) begun so lately as the year 1732, when the French over-run this part of Italy; but it has been carried on with such fervor and success, that the Italians go far beyond their patterns, the Parisian ladies, in the extent of their liberty. I am not so much surprised at the women's conduct, as I am amazed at the change in the men's sentiments. Jealousy, which was once a point of honour among them, is exploded to that degree, that it is become the most infamous and ridiculous of all characters; and you cannot more affront a gentleman, than to suppose him capable of it. Divorces are also introduced, and frequent enough; they have long been in fashion in Genoa; several of the finest and greatest ladies there having two husbands alive.

I am afraid you will think this a long letter; but you tell me that you are without company, and in solitude, though yours appears to me to be a sort of paradise. You have an agreeable habitation, a pleasant garden, a man you love and who loves you, and are surrounded with a numerous and hopeful progeny. May they all prove comforts to your age! That and all other blessings are daily wished for you by, my dear child,

Your affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Venice, March 18, 1760.

MY DEAR CHILD,— I am afraid some letters both of yours and mine are lost, nor am I much surprised at it, seeing the managements here. In this world much must be suffered, and we ought all to follow the rule of Epictetus, "Bear and forbear." General Wolfe (1) is to be lamented, but not pitied. I am of your opinion, that compassion is only owing to his mother and intended bride, who I think the greater sufferer, (however sensible I am of a parent's tenderness). Disappointments in youth are those which are felt with the greatest anguish, when we are all in expectation of happiness, perhaps not to be found in this life. I am very much diverted with the adventures of the three graces who are coming to London, and

(1) General Wolfe was killed, at the siege of Quebec, September 16, 1759.

am heartily sorry their mother has not learning enough to write memoirs. She might make the fortune of half a dozen Dodsleys. The youngest girl (called here *Bettina*) is taller than the Duchess of Montagu, and as red and white as any German alive. If she has sense enough to follow good instructions, she will be irresistible, and my produce very glorious novelties. Our great minister has her picture in his collection—*basta !*

My health is better than I can reasonably expect at my age, but my life is so near a conclusion, that where or how I pass it (if innocently) is almost become indifferent to me. I have outlived the greatest part of my acquaintance; and, to say the the truth, a return to crowd and bustle, after my long retirement, would be disagreeable to me. Yet, if I could be of use either to your father or your family, I would venture the shortening the insignificant days of your affectionate mother,

M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

April 11, 1760.

MY DEAR CHILD,—I desire you will make my sincere congratulations to the Duke and Duchess of Portland, on the happy disposal of Lady Betty, (1) with my real wishes for her future felicity. I send no compliments to her, who was too much an infant to remember me; neither do I write to either of her parents, to avoid giving them the trouble of answering a stupid letter. They have business enough on this occasion, and I hope they both know me enough to believe that any descendant from Lady Oxford (could I live so long as to see the third and fourth generation) has a right to my desires (however insignificant my endeavours) to serve them. I once wished much to see Lord Titchfield, he having been the principal favourite of my ever honoured friend, but as things are managed here, am really glad he does not pass by Venice.

Sir Wyndham Knatchbull, and a worthy clergyman, his governor, are under such ridiculous persecutions, merely for their civilities to me, that I heartily pray none of my friends and relations may travel hither. I should be ashamed (in regard to the Venetians, who are many of them particularly obliging to me) to be slighted; and very sorry to expose those, I wish to be well entertained, to disagreeable treatment, either in their own persons, or in that of the gentlemen who are chose

(1) Lady Elizabeth Bentinck, married to Thomas Viscount Weymouth, afterwards Marquis of Bath; this marriage took place in May 1759.

by their guardians to accompany them. You will be so astonished at this account I am afraid you should (as well you may) suspect me of dotage. I confess it is highly incredible; yet litteral simple truth without the least provocation given by Sir W. who is, (as I have already told you,) apart from the partiality it is natural for me to have for him, one of the most modest, well-disposed young men I have known abroad, and generally beloved by all that know him: even those who do not imitate his sobriety, applaud his conduct and that of his governor; whose only crime is endeavouring to preserve the health and good principles of his pupil. Your worthy friend the General is fully sensible of the ill behaviour of these great people, (who fancy they represent their patrons,) and has made what remonstrances he could; which were coldly received and instead of reformation, an encrease of ill manners succeeded. I suppose these deep politicians intend to drive me out of the town in a pique; or more refinedly expect I should desire their recall; being every day complaining of this odious country, and wishing a more advantageous situation. They do not know me: I cannot be provoked either to misbehave myself to oblige my enemies, or ministerially to reward those that rail against me. I have throughout my long life persisted in no compliance with hush-money; while I knew I did not want any excuse for my actions. Perhaps I have suffered by it; yet such have ever been my sentiments, which, it may be, you will call wrong-headed.

I am exceeding glad of your father's good health: he owes it to his uncommon abstinence and resolution. I wish I could boast the same. I own I have too much indulged a sedentary humour, and have been a rake in reading. You will laugh at the expression, but I thing the literal meaning of the ugly word rake, is one that follows his pleasures in contradiction to his reason. I thought mine so innocent I might pursue them with impunity. I now find that I was mistaken, and that all excesses are (tho' not equally) blameable. My spirits in company are false fire, I have a damp within; from marshy grounds frequently arises an appearance of light. I grow splenetic, and consequently ought to stop my pen, for fear of conveying the infection; I would only communicate happiness to my dear child, being ever your most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

May 19, 1760.

My dear Child,—I am sorry to begin this letter with a sort of complaint, tho' I am persuaded Mr. Prescot is more to blame than you. However, I am really concerned that he imagines he has reason to be offended. I never saw him, but I know these sort of people are apt to be very punctilious; and he is so much displeased (as he says) at the reception you gave him, he desires to decline the correspondence, which I hoped would have been more safe and expeditious than any other I have hitherto hit upon. I wish you would enquire whether the Duke and Duchess of Portland have received my letters, which I sent at the same time with yours, but have had no return.

I congratulate my grand-daughters on being born in an age so much enlightened. Sentiments are certainly extreme silly, and only qualify young people to be the bubbles of all their acquaintance. I do not doubt the frequency of assemblies has introduced a more enlarged way of thinking; it is a kind of public education, which I have always thought as necessary for girls as for boys. A woman marry'd at five and twenty, from under the eye of a strict parent, is commonly as ignorant as she was at five; and no more capable of avoiding the snares, and struggling with the difficulties, she will infallibly meet with in the commerce of the world. The knowledge of mankind (the most useful of all knowledge) can only be acquir'd by conversing with them. Books are so far from giving that instruction, they fill the head with a set of wrong notions, from whence spring the tribes of Clarissas, Harriots, etc. Yet such was the method of education when I was in England, which I had it not in my power to correct; the young will always adopt the opinions of their companions, rather than the advice of their mothers.

There is nothing talk'd of here but earthquakes, the greatest part of which I believe to be wholly imaginary. But the panic is so spread, that if a rat runs over the ceiling, it is suppos'd a shock, and here are daily processions, pilgrimages, etc. to deprecate Divine vengeance. I am tempted to laugh, but restrain'd by prudential considerations.

I am very much pleased with Lady Jane's letter, and wish it was longer. My compliments and thanks to Lord Bute; I am afraid his picture will be long in coming, if I can get it at all.

Your affectionate mother M. Wortley.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Nov. 18, 1760.

I GIVE you thanks (my dear child) for your information of the death of the King. You may imagine how I am affected by it. I will not trouble you in this busy time with a long letter. I do not doubt you are sufficiently tormented by pretensions and petitions. I hope you will not forget poor Mr. Anderson; and I desire Lord Bute to take care that Sir James Stewart's name is not excluded in the act of indemnity. This is a very small favour, yet it will make the happiness of a man of great merit.

My health is very precarious; may yours long continue, and the prosperity of your family. I bless God I have lived to see you so well establish'd, and am ready to sing my *Nunc dimittis* with pleasure.

I own I could wish that we had a minister here, who I had not reason to suspect would plunder my house, if I die while he is in authority. General Graham is exceedingly infirm, and also so easily imposed on, that whatever his intentions may be, he is incapable of protecting any body. You will (perhaps) laugh at these apprehensions, since whatever happens in this world after our death is certainly nothing to us. It may be though a fantastic satisfaction, but I confess I cannot help being earnestly desirous that what I leave may fall into your hands. Do not so far mistake me as to imagine I would have the present M. removed by advancement, which would have the sure consequence of my suffering (if possible) more impertinence from his successor.

My dear child, I am ever your most affectionate mother,

M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Venice, Nov, 6, 1760.

MY DEAR CHILD,—I am afraid you will think me very troublesome, and that I do not enough consider the various duties you are now obliged to. Indeed I am thoroughly sensible you have little time to throw away, but I am (privately) solicited to mention a thing to you, which, in my opinion, I ought not to omit.

The senate have appointed two procurators of St. Mark to compliment his Majesty on his accession. They are of the first families here, Contarini and Morosini, and are neither of them married. Madam Capello has been so ridiculous, both at London and Rome, that I believe they will not often send ambassadresses. These cavaliers are of such a character as will do

honour to their country: they are vastly rich, and desirous to show their magnificence in the court of England. They apprehend (I know not why) that they shall be thanked and not permitted to come. I am far from a politician, God knows, but it seems to me, both in public and private life, civilities should never be refused, when they are sincerely meant as proofs of respect. I have no personal interest in this affair, nor can receive any advantage from their embassy, but an opportunity of sending some trifles to my grandaughter, which I hoped to do by Lord Titchfield, (1) who has been long at Turin. I am now told he will not take Venice in his road, when he returns to London.

I am sorry to tell you I fear General Graham is in a declining state of health. I suppose you know poor Mr. Hamilton is at Petersburgh. I am ever, my dear child,

Your most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Venice, Nov. 18, 1760.

MY DEAR CHILD,—The three fine ladies I mentioned set out for London three days ago. The father's name was Wynne, of Yorkshire, and the Signora Madre is a Greek, and I believe, once remarkably handsome. I should have said much more about them, if you had been at Caen-Wood, and in full leisure to read novels. The story deserves the pen of my dear Smollett, who, I am sorry, disgraces his talent by writing those stupid romances, commonly called history. Shebbeare does yet worse, and dabbles in filthy politics, instead of making more Lydias for my entertainment.

I thank God I can live here in a quiet retirement. I am very far from any view beyond tranquillity; and if I have been so much vexed at Murray's behaviour, I desire not his ruin. I am told he gives political reasons for his conduct towards me, which, if true, I ought to pardon him by all the maxims of modern ethics.

My dear child, I am ever Your affectionate mother,

M. WORTLEY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BUTE.

Padoua, Nov. 23.

MY DEAR CHILD,—I heartily wish you joy of your present

(1) The late Duke of Portland.

situation. Lord Bute (1) has attained it by a very uncommon road; I mean an acknowledged honour and probity. I have but one short instruction (pardon the word) to give on his account; that he will never forget the real interest of Prince and People cannot be divided, and are almost as closely united as that of Soul and Body. I could preach long on this subject, but I ought to consider your time is now fully taken up, and you can have no leisure for reading my tedious letters. I shall henceforward relinquish the motherly prerogative, I have hitherto indulged, of tireing your patience with long discourses. I went to Venice a few days ago, and in the house of General Graham (whose obliging friendship I shall ever gratefully own) I saw Mr. Cunningham and his lady. They appeared to me to have great merit and politeness; they offered in a very friendly manner to carry my present to you; but designing to proceed on their journey in these perillous times I thought it better to delay it. I hope to send it, early in the spring, by the hand of Lord Archer's son, who is now at Rome. It is possible a peace may be treating by that time. God bless you and yours; which is the constant prayer of, dear child,

Your most affectionate mother, M. WORTLEY.

I have wrote you several letters since my arrival here, which I hope you have received tho' you do not mention them. My compliments to Lord Bute.

(1) In the last of the letters of the Honourable Horace Walpole to Sir H. Mann, dated October 28, 1760, an account is given of King George the Second's death, on the Friday preceding the 27th, and mention is made of the duke of York and Lord Bute having been named by the new king to be "of the cabinet council," which was propably *the situation* to which Lady Mary refers in the beginning of this letter. He had been for some time before Groom of the Stole to the Prince of Wales, and continued in that office with the new king till he was appointed Secretary of State, on the resignation of Lord Holdernesse, on the 25th of March 1761. On the resignation of the Duke of Newcastle, Lord Bute became, on the 26th May 1762, first Lord of the Treasury, which office he resigned on the 8th April 1763, and never afterwards took an active part in public life.

LETTERS

TO MRS. HEWET. (1)

'T is so long since I had a letter from dear Mrs. Hewet, I should think her no longer in the land of the living, if Mr. Resingade did not assure me he was happier than I, and had heard of your health from your own hand; which makes me fancy that my last miscarried, and perhaps you are blaming me at the same time that you are thinking me neglectful of you. Apropos of Mr. Resingade—we are grown such good friends, I assure you, that we write Italian letters to each other, and I have the pleasure of talking to him of Madame Hewet. He told me he would send you the two tomes of Madame de Noyer's Memoirs. I fancy you will find yourself disappointed in them, for they are horridly grave and insipid; and instead of the gallantry you might expect, they are full of dull morals. I was last Thursday at the new Opera, and saw Nicolini strangle a lion with great gallantry. But he represented nakedness so naturally, I was surprised to see those ladies stare at him without any confusion, that pretend to be so violently shocked at a poor *double entendre* or two in a comedy; which convinced me that those prudes who would cry fie! fie! at the word *naked*, have no scruples about the thing. The marriage of Lord Willoughby goes on, and he swears he will bring the lady down to Nottingham races. How far it may be true, I cannot tell. By what fine gentlemen say, you know, it

(1) The originals of these letters were bequeathed, with other papers, to Lady Wastneys, relict of Sir Hardolph Wastneys, of Headon Hall. They were, chiefly, written by Lady M. Pierrepont about two years previously to her marriage; and exhibit a lively portrait of the manners of a young woman of quality at the beginning of the last century.

Mrs. (afterwards Lady) Hewet, was the youngest daughter of Richard Bettinson, esq. by Albina, daughter and co-heir of Edward Cecil, Lord Viscount Wimbleton. She married Mr. T. Hewet, surveyor-general of his majesty's woods and works. He was knighted in 1719, and settled at Shireoacks, in Nottinghamshire, where he died in 1726. His lady long survived him, and was remarkable for her accomplishments and beauty.

is not easy to guess at what they mean. The lady has made an acquaintance with me after the manner of Pyramus and Thisbe: I mean over a wall three yards high, which separates our garden from Lady Guildford's. The young ladies had found out a way to pull out two or three bricks, and so climb up and hang their chins over the wall, where we, mounted on chairs, used to have many *belles conversations à la dérobée* for fear of the old mother. This trade continued several days; but fortune seldom permits long pleasures. By long standing on the wall, the bricks loosened; and, one fatal morning, down drops Miss Nelly; and, to complete this misfortune, she fell into a little sink, and bruised her poor —— self to that terrible degree, she is forced to have surgeons, plaisters, and God knows what, which discovered the whole intrigue; and their mamma forbade them ever to visit us, but by the door. Since that time, all our communications have been made in a vulgar manner, visiting in coaches, etc., etc., which took away half the pleasure. You know danger gives a *haut goût* to every thing. This is our secret history—pray let it be so still—but I hope all the world will know that I am most entirely yours, M. P.

TO MRS. HEWET.

I HOPE my dear Mrs. Hewet does not believe that I follow my inclination, when I am two or three posts before I return thanks for her most agreeable letters; but in this busy town there is very little time at one's own disposal. My greatest pleasure is at Mrs. Selwyn's: (1) I came from thence just now, and I believe am the only young woman in town that am in my own house at ten o'clock to-night. This is the night of Count Turrucca's ball, to which he has invited a few bare-faced, and the whole town *en masque*. I suppose you will have a description of it, from some who were at it; I can only give it at second-hand, and will therefore say nothing of it. I have begun to learn Italian, and am much mortified I cannot do it of a signor of Monsieur Resingade's recommendation; but 't is always the fate of women to obey, and my papa has promised me to a Mr. Cassotti. I am afraid I shall never understand it so well as you do—but *laissons cela*, and talk of somewhat more entertaining.

Next to the great ball, what makes the most noise is the

(1) Albinia Bettinson, Mrs. Hewet's eldest sister, married Major-general William Selwyn, of Matson in Gloucestershire.

marriage of an old maid, who lives in this street, without a portion, to a man of 7,000*l.* *per annum*, and they say 40,000*l.* in ready money. Her equipage and liveries outshine any body's in town. He has presented her with 3,000*l.* in jewels; and never was man more smitten with these charms that had lain invisible for these forty years; but, with all his glory, never bride had fewer enviers, the dear beast of a man is so filthy, frightful, odious, and detestable. I would turn away such a footman, for fear of spoiling my dinner, while he waited at table. They were married on Friday, and came to church *en parade* on Sunday. I happened to sit in the pew with them, and had the honour of seeing Mrs. Bride fall fast asleep in the middle of the sermon, and snore very comfortably; which made several women in the church think the bridegroom not quite so ugly as they did before. Envious people say 't was all counterfeited to please him, but I believe that to be scandal; for I dare swear, nothing but downright necessity could make her miss one word of the sermon. He professes to have married her for her devotion, patience, meekness, and other Christian virtues he observed in her: his first wife, (who has left no children) being very handsome, and so good-natured as to have ventured her own salvation to secure his. He has married this lady to have a companion in that paradise where his first has given him a title. I believe I have given you too much of this couple; but they are not to be comprehended in few words.

My dear Mrs. Hewet, remember me and believe that nothing can put you out of my head.

TO MRS. HEWET.

Arlington-street.

I DO not doubt but that before this time, my dear Mrs. Hewet has a thousand times called me ungrateful, and as often repented of the many kindnesses she has done me in the country. *Les apparences sont trompeuses*—I am as much your servant as ever, and think of you with the friendship and acknowledgment I owe you. A train of disagreeable events have hindered my having one leisure moment; and at this very time my poor head is distracted with such a variety of *galimatias*, that I cannot tell you one bit of news. The fire I suppose you have had a long and true account of, though not perhaps that we were raised at three o'clock, and kept waking till five, by the most dreadful sight I ever saw in my life. It was near enough to fright all our servants half out of their

senses: however, we escaped better than some of our neighbours. Mrs. Braithwayte, a Yorkshire beauty, who had been but two days married to a Mr. Coleman, ran out of bed *en chemise*, and her husband followed her in his, in which pleasant dress they ran as far as St. James's-street, where they met with a chair, and prudently crammed themselves both into it, observing the rule of dividing the good and bad fortune of this life, resolved to run all hazards together, and ordered the chairmen to carry them both away, perfectly representing, both in love and nakedness, and want of eyes to see that they were naked, our first happy parents. Sunday last I had the pleasure of hearing the whole history from the lady's own mouth.

The next most extraordinary adventure is the famous quarrel between her Grace of Hamilton with Captain Hero; but I suppose you cannot be ignorant of so surprising an event.

Deaths nor marriages I know of none, but Sir Stephen Evans, that hanged himself, and my sister Evelyn, who will be married next week. The post-bell rings; my next shall be longer, with some account of your fair family.(1)

TO MRS. HEWET.

I SUPPOSE my dear Mrs. Hewet has by this time resolved never to think more on so insensible and ungrateful a creature, that could be so long in returning thanks for such a letter, and has repented of past favours. I cannot blame your resentment, appearances are so much against me; and yet I am not so much to blame as you imagine. You expressed a desire of seeing a second part of the Atalantis. I had just then sent to London for it, and did not question having it last Saturday. I hoped that a book you had a mind to see might atone for the nothingness of my letter, and was resolved not to send one without the other; but, like an unfortunate projector as I am, my designs are always followed by disappointment. Saturday came, and no book; God forgive me, I had certainly wished the lady who was to send it me hanged, but for the hopes it was come by the Nottingham carrier, and then I should have it on Monday: but, after waiting Monday and Tuesday, I find it is not come at all. Now, madam, I do not question your forgiveness, and your hope, that when I do not write to Mrs. Hewet, there is some unavoidable cause for my silence. Your

(1) Lady Evelyn Pierrepoint was married to John the first Earl Gower, 19th March 1712; the date of this letter, therefore, must have been in the beginning of that month.

news and your book very much diverted me : it is an old, but very pleasant, Spanish novel. When we leave this place I am not able to tell you. I have no reason to wish it, but, since I cannot see you, that it may be in my power to write you more entertaining letters. I had some last post told me that Lady Essex Saville was going to be married to Lord Lonsdale. I won't swear to the truth of it, for people make no conscience of what they write into the country, and think any thing good enough for poor us. There is another story that I had from a hand I dare depend upon. The Duke of Grafton and Dr. Garth ran a foot-match in the mall of 200 yard, and the latter, to his immortal glory, beat. I pray God you mayn't have heard this already. I am promised a cargo of lampoons from the Bath, and if they come safe, you shall share them with me. My dear Mrs. Hewet, could I contribute any way to your diversion, it would be the height of my ambition.

TO MRS. HEWET.

Nov. 12.

You have not then received my letter? Well, I shall run mad. I can suffer any thing rather than that you should continue to think me ungrateful. I think 't is the last of pains to be thought criminal, where one most desires to please, as I am sure it is always my wish to dear Mrs. Hewet.

I am very glad you have the second part of the New Atalantis: if you have read it, will you be so good as to send it me? and in return, I promise to get you the key to it. I know I can. But do you know what has happened to the unfortunate authoress? People are offended at the liberty she uses in her memoirs, and she is taken into custody. Miserable is the fate of writers: if they are agreeable, they are offensive; and if dull, they starve. I lament the loss of the other parts which we should have had; and have five hundred arguments at my fingers' ends to prove the ridiculousness of those creatures that think it worth while to take notice of what is only designed for diversion. After this, who will dare to give the history of Angella? I was in hopes her faint essay would have provoked some better pen to give more elegant and secret memoirs; but now she will serve as a scarecrow to frighten people from attempting any thing but heavy panegyric; and we shall be teazed with nothing but heroic poems, with names at length, and false characters, so daubed with flattery, that they are the severest kind of lampoons, for they both scandalize the writer and the subject, like that vile paper the Tatler.

I believe, madam, you will think I have dwelt too long on this business; but I am in a violent passion about it. My dear Mrs. Hewet, is it impossible you should come here? I would not ask it if I had a coach to wait upon you; but I am not born to have any thing I have a mind to. All the news I know is, that Mrs. Reeves is married to Colonel Sydney (if you know neither of them, I'll send you their pictures at full length); and that giddy rake Cresswell, to a fortune of 2000*l*. a year. I send you the Bath lampoons—Corinna is Lady Manchester, and the other Lady is Mrs. Cartwright, who, they say, has pawned her diamond necklace, to buy Valentine a snuff-box. These wars make men so violent scarce, that these good ladies take up with the shadows of them. This is the sum total of all the news I know, and you see I am willing to divert you all in my power. I fancy the ill spelling of the lampoons will make you laugh more than the verses; indeed I am ashamed for her who wrote them. As soon as possible, be pleased to send me the second part of the Atalantis, etc.

TO MRS. HEWET.

TEN thousand thanks to you for Madame de Noyer's letters; I wish Signor Roselli may be as diverting to you as *she* has been to me. The stories are very extraordinary; but I know not whether she has not added a few *agrémens* of invention to them: however, there is some truth. I have been told, in particular, that the history of the fair unfortunate Madame de Barbesierre is so, by people who could not be suspected of romancing. Don't you think that the court of England would furnish stories as entertaining? Say nothing of my malice; but I cannot help wishing that Madame de Noyer would turn her thoughts a little that way. I fancy she would succeed better than the authoress of the New Atalantis. I am sure I like her method much better, which has, I think, hit that difficult path between the gay and the severe, and is neither too loose, nor affected by pride.

I take an interest in Mr. Selwyn's success. In a battle like that, I think it may be called so to come off alive. I should be so sensible of any affliction that could touch you or Mrs. Selwyn, that I may very well rejoice when you have no occasion for any. Adieu, madam. This post has brought me nothing but compliments, without one bit of news. I heard the last, that Lord Stair was wounded. You can tell me whether to believe it or no.

Excuse my dullness; and be so good as never to read a let-

ter of mine but in one of those minutes when you are entirely alone, weary of every thing, and *inquiete* to think what you shall do next. All people who live in the country must have some of those minutes, and I know so well what they are, that I believe even my letters may be welcome, when they are to take them off your hands.

TO MRS. HEWET.

I HAVE a thousand thanks to give to my dear Mrs. Hewet for her news, and above all the letter; and I would not have delayed them, but your messenger was in haste, and I was resolved to write you a long scribble. My advices of Saturday say, that a peace will positively be concluded. This comes from the same hand that wrote so contrary on Thursday, and I depend very much on the intelligence. I am charmed with your *correspondante*, for I hope it is a woman; and if it is, I reckon her an honour to our sex. I am in no fear of the reflection you mention; and, as I am perfectly innocent, God knows, I am far from thinking I can be suspected. Your news, and no news, I know not what to make of at present. My domestic affairs go on so ill, I want spirits to look abroad. I have got a cold that disables my eyes, and disorders me every way; and, after much contestation, I have submitted to take medicine. You see how stupid I am; but I have the oddest jumble of disagreeable things in my head that ever plagued poor mortals: a great cold, a bad peace, people I love in disgrace, sore eyes, the horrid prospect of a civil war, and the thoughts of a filthy potion to take. I believe nobody ever had such a melange before. My companions are your servants. I had forgot the Spectators: one is not worth mentioning; the other is so plain and so good sense, I wonder any body of five years old does not find out that he is in the right.

TO MRS. HEWET.

I WOULD have writ long ago to dear Mrs. Hewet, but I waited for the good news of saying when I might hope to see you, which I now despair of for this long time. We go next week into Wiltshire, which will be quite a new world to us. I was about eight years old when I left it, and have entirely forgot every thing in it. I am sorry we shall not see you, though I am still in hopes we shall return into Nottinghamshire the latter end of the year; but all that is supposals, and I have no ground to believe it, but that I wish it very much.

You can expect no news from one who has nothing at present in her head but packing up, and the ideas that naturally come upon going to a place, I may almost say, I never saw, so perfectly have I forgotten it. Be so good when you see Mrs. Levenz to ask her if she received my letter; if she did not, I am sure I must suffer very much in her opinion, and appear very ungrateful, after her inquiry when I was sick. Mrs. Hewet should never talk of being rivalled; there is no such thing as not liking her, or liking any body else better. It is a provoking thing to think, so many tedious years as we have passed at Thoresby, we should always be asunder so many dirty miles, and the first summer you come nearer, I am tossed to the other side of the world, where I do not know so much as one creature, and am afraid I shall not meet with such agreeable neighbours as in Nottinghamshire. But destiny must be followed, and I own, was I to choose mine, it should never be to stay perpetually in the same place. I should even prefer little storms to an eternal calm; and though I am displeased not to see you, I am not sorry to see a new part of the kingdom.

My dear Mrs. Hewet, preserve me your friendship wherever my fortune carries me, and believe that I am equally in all places yours. M. P.

Continue your direction to Arlington-street.

TO MRS. HEWET.

Till this minute I was in hopes of waiting on dear Mrs. Hewet before we left the country, which made me defer writing; but now positive orders oblige us to go to-morrow, and the horses must rest to-day, so that this paper must give you thanks for me, for all the many favours which could not have been bestowed on one who could have had a more quick and lasting sense of them. When I am in London, I will certainly send you all that passes, though I fancy you have it from people better both at writing and intelligence.

Mrs. C. whose character you desire to know, is a lady who has made a great noise in the world; but I never thought she would come to make such a figure in it. The lord she has snapt made a lampoon on her last winter. For my part, I never heard her speak in my life. She is generally thought handsome. If Miss Selwyn (as I wish she may) supplies her place, (1) there will be one much handsomer. Amidst the hurry of taking such a journey to-morrow, I am sure you will forgive my letter's

(1) Probably at court.

being no longer: you know people can never leave your company, or writing to you, without regret. Write to me where to direct to you, and direct to me in Arlington-street, near St. James's, London.

TO MRS. HEWET.

Most of the neighbours hereabouts have been to see me, but they are very few, and few of those few that are supportable —none agreeable. This part of the world is so different from Nottinghamshire, that I can hardly persuade myself it is in the same kingdom. The men here are all Sylvias, no Myrtillos. If they could express themselves so well, they would say, like him,

"Mille ninfe darei per una fera
Che da Melampo mio cacciata fosse;
Godasi queste gioje
Chi n' ha di me più gusto; io non le sento."

Though they cannot say it in Italian verse, they often speak to that purpose in English prose over a bottle, insensible of other pleasures than hunting and drinking. The consequence of which is, the poor female part of their family being seldom permitted a coach, or at best but a couple of starved jades to drag a dirty chariot, their lords and masters having no occasion for such a machine, as their mornings are spent among hounds, and the nights with as beastly companions, with what liquor they can get in this country, which is not very famous for good drink. If this management did not hinder me the company of my *she* neighbours, I should regret the absence of the Pastor Fidos, being of the opinion of Sylvia in Tasso:

"Altri segua i diletti dell' amore,
Se pur v' è nell' amor alcun diletto.'

I would fain persuade you to practise your Italian. I fear I shall forget to speak it, for want of somebody to speak it to. Amongst the rest of the advantages I should have in your conversation (if I should be so happy as to be with you), I would endeavour to improve in that polite language. I find you are very busy about politics; we are the same here, particularly in the pulpit, where the parsons would fain become as famous as Sacheverel, and are very sorry that they cannot have the honour of being *tried* too. For my part, I content myself in my humble sphere, am passive in their disputes, and endeavour to study my Italian in peace and quietness. But people mistake very much in placing peace in woods and shades, for I believe

solitude puts people out of humour, and makes them disposed to quarrel, or there would not be so many disputes about religion and liberty, by creatures that never understood the first, nor have, or are likely to have, a taste of the latter.

"Crush'd by the stint of thirty pounds a-year."

TO MRS. HEWET.

I WOULD willingly return dear Mrs. Hewet something more, for diverting me so well, than dry thanks impertinently expressed. 'T is reported that Lady Charlotte Finch is to marry Lord Conway, and Lady Margaret Tufton, Lord Brooke. (1) Beside the dismal changes of state, this is all I know. I fear I write nonsense; but it happens miraculously to be in a room full of company, and if I omit this opportunity, I know not when I may have another of sending. Mr. Sterne, the *titular* bishop, was last week married to a very pretty woman, Mrs. Bateman, whom he fell in love with for falling backward from her horse ———— leaping a ditch. Mrs. White, Mrs. Sutton, and Mrs. More, are all with me; and I am so embarrassed with my civilities *tour à tour*, that I have hardly calmness of spirit to tell you, in a composed way, that I am your thankful humble servant,

M. W. M.

TO MRS. HEWET.

York, Nov. 1713.

'T IS not owing either to insensibility or ingratitude that I have not yet returned my thanks to dear Mrs. Hewet for her obliging letter; but the weakness of my sight will not permit me to express the dictates of my heart, and I am forced to sit by the fireside and think you a thousand thanks, when I would be putting them upon paper. I rejoice that Lady Harriet has shown some sensibility, as unworthy an object as she has chosen; yet I think 't is better than (as I feared she had) dutifully making over all her senses along with her fortune, for the use of her grace; I thought her other faculties as imperfect as that of hearing. I am glad she is not such a stock as I took her to be. I beg your pardon that I must write a letter without news, but I do not know one bit, if it were to stand one instead of my neck-verse. I am here waiting the meeting of the parliament, and am persuaded you will be in London before me; if not, I will endeavour to see you. You talk of the Duke

(1) These intended marriages never took place.

of Leeds—I hear that he has placed his heroic love upon the bright charms of a pewterer's wife; and, after a long amour, and many perilous adventures, has stolen the fair lady, which, in spite of his wrinkles and grand-child, persuade people of his youth and gallantry. You see what stuff I am forced to write; but to such I am compelled, excepting I should entertain you with York loves and piques, which would be as dull to you as what passed at the last wake. 'T is impossible to laugh at what they do, without having first laughed at what they are.

I am, madam, yours, M. W. M.

This is abrupt; but the post will wait for no man.

TO MRS. HEWET.

Adrianople, April 1, 1717.

I DARE say my dear Mrs. Hewet thinks me the most stupid thing alive, to neglect so agreeable a correspondence: but it has hitherto been utterly out of my power to continue it. I have been hurried up and down, without intermission, these last eight months. Wholly taken up either in going post, or unavoidable court attendance. You know very well how little leisure it is possible to find on either of those employments. I like travelling extremely, and have had no reason to complain of having had too little of it, having now gone through all the Turkish dominions in Europe, not to reckon my journeys through Hungary, Bohemia, and the whole tour of Germany; but those are trifles to this last. I cannot, however (thank God,) complain of having suffered by fatigue, either in my own health or that of my family. My son never was better in his life. This country is certainly one of the finest in the world; hitherto all I see is so new to me, it is like a fresh scene of an opera every day. I will not tire you with descriptions of places or manners, which perhaps you have no curiosity for; but only desire you would be so good as to let me hear as oft as you can (which can be no other than very seldom), what passes on your side of the globe. Before you can receive this, you must consider all things as six months old, which now appear new to me. There will be a great field for you to write, if your charity extends so far, as it will be entirely disinterested and free from ostentation (it not being possible for me here to boast of your letters), and it will be very beneficial to your precious soul, which I pray Heaven to put into your head to consider and practise accordingly. M. W. M.

LETTERS FROM LADY MARY

TO

HENRIETTA, COUNTESS OF OXFORD AND MORTIMER, (1)

DURING HER LAST RESIDENCE ABROAD.

[Received at Dover-street, Tuesday May 2nd, O. S.]

April 13, N. S. Avignon.

IT is two posts since I had the honour of your ladyship's obliging letter, which is a longer time than I have ever yet been without returning thanks for that happiness; but the post is now stopp'd, and I should not have ventur'd to write at present, if I had not an apportunity of sending by an English family which is leaving this place, tho' I think a correspondence as inoffensive as ours might be permitted in the midst of war. There would be neither party nor contest in the world, if all people thought of politics with the same indifferency that I do; but I find by experience that the utmost innocence and strictest silence is not sufficient to guard against suspicion, and I am look'd upon here as capable of very great designs, at the same time that I am, and desire to be, ignorant of all projects whatever. It is natural, and (I think) just, to wish well to one's religion and country, yet as I can serve neither by disputes, I am content to pray for both in my closet, and avoid all subjects of controversie as much as I can; however I am watch'd here as a dangerous person, which I attribute chiefly to Mrs. Hay, who having chang'd her own religion, has a secret hatred against every one that does not do the same. My health, which your ladyship enquires after so kindly is extreme good; I thank God I am sensible of no distemper or infirmity: I hope all your complaints are vanish'd. I saw Lord Goring (2) at Venice; he appear'd to me a very well dispos'd young man. I

(1) Henrietta Cavendish Holles, only daughter and heir of John Duke of Newcastle, married Edward second Earl of Oxford and Mortimer, and by him had issue one only daughter, Margaret Cavendish, born February 11, 1714, who married, in 1734, William Duke of Portland, grandfather of the present Duke.

(2) Probably Lord Gowran, afterwards Earl of Upper Ossory.

hear Miss F. Levison (1) has made a silly match, which I am sorry for, tho' I hope it may turn out better than is expected. I am concern'd for poor Miss Cole's distresses, her merit deserves better fortune. Dearest madam, take care of your selfe; while you live, there is allways a great blessing allow'd to Your ladyship's most faithfull devoted servant,

M. W. MONTAGU.

[Received at Dover-street; Monday June 4th, O. S.]

June 1, N. S. (1744).

DEAREST MADAM,—I have many thanks to give you for the agreable news of your health (which is allways in the first place regarded by me), and the safe delivery of the Dutchess of Portland, whose little son will, I hope, grow up a blessing to you both; I heartily congratulate your ladyship on this increase of your family, may you long enjoy the happyness of seeing their prosperity!

I am less surpriz'd at Lady Sophia's (2) marriage than at the fortune Lord Pomfret has given her; she had charms enough to expect to make her fortune, and I believe the raising of such a summ must be uneasy in his present circumstances. By the accounts I have receiv'd of Lady John Sackville, I think the young couple are much to be pity'd, and am sorry to hear their relations treat them with so much severity; if I was in England, I would endeavour to serve them.

Mrs. Hay has behaved to me with a great deal of impertinence; there is no principle to be expected from a woman of her character. Your ladyship need not mention your command of continuing our correspondence; it is the only comfort of my life, and I should think myself the last of human beings if I was capable of forgetting the many obligations I have to you: if you could see my heart, you would never mention any thing of that kind to me; it is impossible to have a more tender and grateful sense of all your goodness, which, added to the real esteem I have of your merit, binds me to be eternally and inviolably

Your ladyship's most sincere and devoted servant,

M. W. MONTAGU.

Your ladyship will permit me to offer my compliments to the Duke and Dutchess of Portland.

(1) The daughter of Lady Gower, Lady Mary's sister, who married Lord John Sackville, second son of the Duke of Dorset, in 1744. This letter was therefore probably written in that year.

(2) Lady Sophia Fermor married John Earl of Granville in 1744, and died in 1755,

[Received at Dover-street, Monday July 8th, O. S. 1744.]

Avignon, July 2, N. S.

I AM extreemly glad to find by your ladyship's of the 7th of June, that your health is amended, and as I am persuaded that there is nothing more conducive to it than amusements, I think it extreme reasonable you should take that of embellishing your paternal seat, which, on many accounts, I think one of the most rational as well as agreeable you can take. Indeed it is a sort of duty to support a place which has been so long dignified and distinguished by your ancestors, and I believe all people that think seriously, or justly, will be of that opinion; as for others, their censure ought to be wholly disregarded, as it is impossible to be avoided. There are many in the world, incapable of any other sort of conversation, except that of remarking the mistakes of others, and are very often so much mistaken themselves, they blame the most praise-worthy actions, and are so unacquainted with virtue, they do not know it when they see it. I hope your ladyship will live to see finished, and enjoy many years, the beautiful improvements you are making: if I am permitted to see them in your company, I shall esteem myself very happy; if I am so unfortunate to survive you, I have no more prospect of any pleasure upon earth. It is a very great truth, that as your friendship has been the greatest blessing and honor of my life, it is only that which gives me any pleasing view for those years that remain, which, be they few or many, are entirely devoted to you by, dear madam,

Your ladyship's most faithful obedient servant,

M. W. WORTLEY.

[Came to Dover-street, Monday Aug. 13th, O. S.;—received at Welbeck, Thursday 16th, O. S. 1744.]

Avignon, Aug. 10th, N. S.

I AM very glad your ladyship has been at Bulstrode, being fully persuaded the good air and good company there will very much contribute to your health. Your satisfaction is the most agreeable news I can hear, tho' I am very well pleased that one of my nieces is so happily disposed of, but I was told it is Miss Evelyn, (1) and not Miss Betty, (2) that is now Lady

(1) Miss Evelyn Gower married, in only 1744, John the second Lord Gowran, who was created Earl of Upper Ossory, Oct, 5th, 1751. He died in Sept. 1758, and she married Richard Vernon, Fsq. in Feb. 1759.

(2) Miss Elizabeth Gower married, in 1751, John third Earl of Waldegrave.

Goring [Gowran]. I am much obliged to Miss Cole for her remembrance, and am sorry the troubles of that good family are not at an end; there is very seldom merit without persecution, a good conscience is the most valuable of all blessings, and the only one that is beyond the power of fortune.

I hear that Pope is dead, but suppose it is a mistake since your ladyship has never mentioned it: if it is so, I have some small curiosity for the disposition of his affairs, and to whom he has left the enjoyment of his pretty house at Twickenam, which was in his power to dispose, for only one year after his decease.

Dear madam, I know not in what words to thank you for your kind intentions for me in the lottery; I have had so many occasions of the same nature, it is not strange I want expressions to signify my gratitude: you interest yourself too much for one, that I fear is unlucky enough to render useless all your generous endeavours, and can never make you any return, notwithstanding the sincere and inviolable attachment with which I am, dearest madam,

Your ladyship's most faithful devoted servant,

M. W. MONTAGU.

[Came to Dover-street, Tuesday 18th Sept, O. S.;—received at Welbeck, Thursday 20th Sept-]

Avignon, Sept. 14th, N. S. (1745).

THE disorder of your ladyship's health which you mention, gives me the highest concern, tho' I hope it is now over, and that the good air of Welbeck will wholly establish it: I beg of you with the utmost earnestness, that you would be careful of yourself, I can receive no proof of your friendship so obliging to me, tho' I am yours by every tye that can engage a grateful heart. Mr. Wortley has said nothing to me of his visit to your ladyship, nor can I guess on what account it was, but suppose it relating to some country interest; I know so well your just way of thinking, that I am sure you allways act right. Mrs. Massam informed me of the hard fortune of poor Lady Euston: (1) I very much pity Lady Burlington, but should do it

(1) George Earl of Euston was second son of Charles eighth Duke of Grafton, by Lady Henrietta, daughter of Charles Marquis of Worcester, eldest son of Henry Duke of Beaufort. Lord Euston married, in 1741, Lady Dorothy, daughter of Richard, third and last Earl of Burlington of that house; she died in April 1742. Lord Euston died in 1747, leaving no children.

The following is taken from a note to one of the Honourable

yet more, if there had not been some circumstances in her marrying her daughter, which make her in some measure blamable for the event; however, there can be no excuse for the brutal behaviour of her worthless husband. Your happy disposition of the charming Duchess of Portland secures you from all sorrows of that kind, and I pray to God you may live to see your grand-children as happily settled: your life is the greatest blessing that can be bestowed on your family; I am fully persuaded they all think so, and I hope that consideration will be of force to make you careful to preserve it: I need not add how dear it is to me, being to my last moment, dearest madam, with the tenderest affection,

Your ladyship's devoted servant, M. W. MONTAGU.

[Came to Dover-street, Saturday, O. S. Oct. 27;—received at Welbeck, Monday Oc. 29.]

Oct. 15, N. S. Avignon (1744).

DEAREST MADAM,—I have received but this day your ladyship's of August 29th: this length of passage is, I suppose, occasioned by the cessation of correspondence between Dover and Calais; all letters must now go round by Holland, which is a great grief to me, since I must now content myself to be some weeks longer before I can hear from my dearest Lady Oxford, whose kindness was the greatest comfort of my life. Every thing that relates to you is of importance to me; I am therefore very much concerned that you have fallen into ill hands, in your building. The world is so corrupt it is difficult to meet with honesty in any station, and such good hearts as yours, which are not naturally inclined to suspicion, are often liable to be imposed on: if I could think myself capable of being any way useful to you, it would make this distance between us doubly painful to me. I am surprised Lord Burlington is unmentioned in Pope's will; on the whole it appears to me more reasonable and less vain than I expected from him.

Horace Walpole's letters to Sir Horace Mann, dated June 20th, 1743.

"Upon a picture of Lady Dorothy, at the Duke of Devonshire's at Chiswick, is the following touching inscription, written by her mother, which commemorates her virtues and her fate.

"'Lady Dorothy Boyle, born May 14th, 1724; she was the comfort and joy of her parents, the delight of all who knew her angelick temper, and the admiration of all who saw her beauty. She was married October 10th, 1741, and delivered (by death) from misery May 2, 1742.

"'This picture was drawn seven weeks after her death, from memory by her most affectionate mother Dorothy Burlington.'"

I cannot conclude my letter without repeating my most earnest desire, that you would consider your health in the first place, and let no business whatever interrupt your care of it; there is no expression can tell you how dear it is to

Your ladyship's most faithful and affectionate servant,

M. W. MONTAGU.

[Came to Doverstreet, Tuesday 20th Nov. O. S.;—received at Welbeck, Thursday 22nd Nov. O. S.]

DEAREST MADAM,—I received your ladyship's obliging letter of September 24th this morning, and, some time since, that in which was a copy of Pope's will, for which I returned you my immediate thanks, but fear that letter miscarried, since I hear they should all be directed through Holland. These redoubled attacks of your cholic, which must necessarily weaken any constitution, give me inexpressible pain. I had, at the same time, a letter from Mr. Wortley that tells me your health is very uncertain. If I am so unhappy to survive you, I shall look upon myself as a widow and an orphan, having no friend in this world but yourself: if you saw the tears with which these lines are accompanied, you would be convinced of the sincerity of them; let me beg you upon my knees to take care of your life, and let no other regard whatever occasion the neglect of it. I fear the omission of the Bath waters this autumn season may be attended with ill consequences; for God's sake (dear madam) leave all things, when it is necessary think of your own preservation. Mr. Wortley tells me Lady Peterborough (1) is with you, which I am glad of for both your sakes: he adds, that your alterations at Welbeck are in the best taste; I pray Almighty God you may live many comfortable years to enjoy them, and that some part of the reward of your virtue may be in this world: these are the daily and most earnest prayers of

Your ladyship's most faithful and devoted servant,

Avignon, Oct. 19 (1744). M. W. MONTAGU.

[Came to Dover-street, Saturday Feb. O. S.; —received at Welbeck; Monday Feb. 24th, O. S. 1745.]

Avignon, Feb. 15, N. S.

DEAREST MADAM,—I receiv'd, by the last post, an account from Mr. Wortley of your ladyship's kind enquiries after me:

(1) This must have been Mary the daughter of John Cox, Esq. of London, the wife of Charles fourth Earl of Peterborough, who succeeded his grandfather, the famous Lord Peterborough, in 1735; she died in 1755.

't is the first time I have heard from him of many months, tho' he has wrote many times, and I find all my letters have miscarried. I never received that which he tells me you was so good to send by Child, nor any other since September, which I answered immediately: I have addressed several others to you by different ways, but I fear with equal ill fortune; the last I sent was by a servant of the D. of O. who accompanies his corps. I flatter myself (by having now heard from England, and that one of mine to my daughter is come to her hands,) that the post is now open. I can assure you, (dearest madam,) that during all my uneasiness on the interruption of our correspondence, I feared for your health, but never once suspected your forgetting me; I have had too many proofs of your unwearied friendship to think you capable of changing, and, however insignificant I am, I am perfectly persuaded that you will ever retain the goodness you have always had for me, which whenever I forfeit, I must forfeit my reason, since only the loss of that can make me unmindful of your virtue and merit. I believe Lord Arran (1) has been much abus'd in the disposition of his brother's affairs: I cannot help hating the sight of injustice so much, it is with difficulty I restrain myself from meddling, notwithstanding the experience I have, of its being a very thankless office in that family. I cannot express to your ladyship what a comfort it is to me to hear of your health, nor how much I have suffered by the uncertainty of it. I hope our civil broils are now over, and that I may once more have the satisfaction of assuring you frequently that I am ever, dearest madam, inviolably

Your ladyship's obedient faithful servant,

M. W. MONTAGU.

My compliments and good wishes attend your family.

[Received at Welbeck, Monday June 10th, O. S.;—came to Dover-street, 8th, O, S.]

June 1, Avignon (1745).

DEAREST MADAM,—It is but this day I have received the pleasure of your ladyship's obliging letter: it is impossible to tell you the joy it gave me after so long a silence, tho' very much abated by the account of your ill health. I pray with the utmost fervency that your journey may contribute to your

(1) Charles Butler, second and last surviving son of Thomas Earl of Ossory, eldest son of the first Duke of Ormonde. He died without issue in 1758. See Hon. Horace Walpole's letter to Sir Horace Mann, dated Christmas-day 1758.

recovery, and am persuaded that it is the safest, and most probable method of mending a constitution: I could wish it southward, not in regard to my own interest, but as a removal to a better air. I have often repeated to you, how exceeding dear your life is to me; if you valued it as much, all other considerations would be laid aside, when your preservation was in question. I believe the interruption of our correspondence may be partly owing to your ladyship's having forgot to direct your letters enclosed to Monsieur Pierre de Vos, à Rotterdam, Hollande.

Whatever good fortune happens to me, must always come through your hands; this is the first prize that ever came to my share, and it is owing to your ladyship in all senses.

My daughter wrote me word the last post, that Thoresby is utterly destroyed by fire; I cannot help feeling some concern, and, at the same time, making many reflections on the vanity of all worldly possessions: I thank God my heart is so entirely detached from them, that I never desire more than the small portion I enjoy.

I finish my letter with the most earnest recommendations to your ladyship to take care of your health, and the assurances of the most unalterable gratitude and affection from, dearest madam, Your most faithfully devoted humble servant,

M. W. MONTAGU.

[Came to London. July 29, O. S.;—received at Welbeck, Thursday Aug. 1, O. S. 1745.]

Avignon, July 21, N. S.

DEAREST MADAM,—Your ladyship's letters are always greatly agreeable to me, but doubly so when they bring the news of your health: change of air and exercise are the best remedies I know; I am very glad you have experienced them, and hope you will on no account neglect the care of yourself. I cannot express to you how many uneasy moments I have had on that subject; 't is the only way you can be wanting to your friends and family, but it is their greatest as well as tenderest interest, that you should take care to preserve a life so valuable as yours. I pass my time very disagreeably at present amongst the French, their late successes have given them an air of triumph that is very difficult for an English heart to suffer; I think less of politics than most people, yet cannot be entirely insensible of the misfortunes of my country. I am very sorry for the Duke of Kingston's; I believe, in his place, I should renounce building on a spot of ground that has been

twice so unfortunate. I suppose you are now in the midst of your deserving family, and sincerely partake of all the blessings you enjoy in them. Your happyness cannot exceed your merit or my wishes. You will give me leave to present the Duchess of Portland with my respects; at the same time that I assure your ladyship that I am with the truest and most tender affection, Dearest madam, inviolably your's,

Avignon, July 25, N. S. M. W. MONTAGU.

[Came to London, Friday April 17th, 1746, O. S, ;—received at Welbeck, Monday April 21st. 1746, O. S.

Dated, I suppose, from Avignon, April 11, N. S.]

DEAREST MADAM, — I received the happyness of your ladyship's of February 26th but this morning, April 11th, N. S. It has been a long time on the road, but since I have it at length, I ought to be contented. The news here is, in general, peace, which seems wish'd by all sides. When it is settled, I hope our correspondence will meet with no further interruption; it is the greatest comfort of my life, and doubly so when I am inform'd of the recovery of your health. I believe the air of Welbeck (which was that of your infancy) will agree better with you than any other, which makes me wish your ladyship would continue in it as long as your affairs permit. I wrote a letter to you by a servant of the late D. of O., (1) who ask'd me a sort of certificate of his honesty, I suppos'd in order to justify him to Lord Arran, to whom he had (as he said) been misrepresented. I said to you, what I really thought at that time; I have since heard that the poor man is disorder'd in his head, and that he is parted from the other servants with whom he travell'd. I know not what is become either of him or my letter; however, there was nothing in it that can be of any prejudice, containing only my constant assurances of the tenderest friendship for you, and complaints of your silence, which was then so painful to me, I was glad to snatch at any occasion, where there appear'd a possibility of conveying a letter to you; not doubting but those by the post had been lost. Dearest madam, while I have life, I shall ever be, with the highest sense of gratitude,

Your ladyship's most faithful affectionate servant,

M. W. MONTAGU.

(1) Ormonde.

[Came to Dover-street, Saturday May 17th, O. S. 1746;—received at Welbeck, Monday May 19th, O. S.](1)

Feb. 7, N. S.

DEAREST MADAM,—It is impossible to express my uneasiness from your silence: I troubled your ladyship, not many days ago, with a long account of it; not foreseeing the present opportunity of sending this, by one of the late D. of O.'s (2) servants, who has desir'd me to give a certificate of his behaviour to Lord Arran. In justice to him, I cannot refuse saying, that I think I saw none in that large family (where there was as much faction and ill management as in any court in Europe) that seem'd to serve with so much fidelity and attachment: I have that opinion of his honesty, if it was suitable to my little affairs, I would retain him in my own service. Your ladyship (who is always ready to do good) will mention this to Lady Arran. I say nothing of many other things relating to that family which do not concern me; to say truth, the melancholy letters I have from my daughter dispirit me so much, I am hardly capable on thinking else excepting yourself, who is allways first in my thoughts, and will be last in my prayers when ever it pleases God to dismiss from this troublesome world.

Your ladyship's most faithfull obedient servant,

M. W. MONTAGU.

[Came to Dover-street, Thursday June 12th. 1746;—received at Brodsworth, Sunday June 15th, O, S.]

DEAREST MADAM,—I had the happyness of receiving two of your ladyship's ever kind letters this day, June 3rd, N. S. I need not repeat my gratitude, which is always in the highest degree; and yet I think it far below what I owe you, as the best and truest friend that I ever was blest with.—If I am to believe the public accounts, I have reason to hope our intestine troubles are now over; I wish one article in your ladyship's of April 23rd may prove certain, it cannot fail being to our advantage. I will say nothing more of affairs that may occasion my letter being stopp'd, I am persuaded they are all open'd more than once.

I hear the Dutchess of Manchester (3) is marry'd, but I cannot learn to whom. No news interests me so much, as that of your health; it is the highest obligation you can lay on me, to take care of it. I am quite asham'd of the trouble you give

(1) This letter is alluded to in the preceeding. (2) Ormonde.

(3) Isabella, the widow of William the second Duke of Manchester, married, in 1733, Edward Hussey Esq.

yourself in relation to the lottery; you will not be thank'd, or I should say more on that subject. You will permit me to make my acknowledgments to the Duke and Dutchess of Portland for their obliging remembrance: may they long continue blessings to you and each other!

We have had such long and surprising rains in this country, there has been an inundation in this town, that hindered many people from stirring out of their houses: mine happens to be situated so high that I suffered nothing from it; the consequences would however have been very bad if it had lasted, but it was over in two days. I cannot conclude without renewing my solicitations for the care of yourself, with my earnest prayers for your welfare, which are uttered with the greatest zeal by, dearest madam,

Your ladyship's most faithful and affectionate servant,

M. W. MONTAGU.

[Came to Dover-street, Tuesday July 29th, O. S. 1746;—received at Welbeck, Thursday July 31st, O. S.]

Avignon, July 20, N. S.

DEAREST MADAM,—I sincerely beg your ladyship's pardon for what I said in regard to Wilson, since I perceive it has occasion'd you some trouble; it was only an attestation of what I thought due to an honest man, that appear'd to me hardly dealt with by a pack of knaves. I am neither surprised nor offended at Lord Arran's conduct; he has suffered so much in his own interest by misplacing his confidence, nobody ought to be angry at his mistakes towards others.

This is the first time of my life I have been two posts without making any acknowledgements for your ladyship's ever kind letters, which are the comforts of my life; nothing could have hindered my doing it but an indisposition in my eyes, which are still too bad to suffer me to write long, but I fear your tenderness would be in pain for my health if I delayed giving you some account of it. God preserve your's, and add to it every other blessing! I can say no more but the constant repetition of my being ever, dearest madam,

Your most faithfully affectionate humble servant,

M. W. MONTAGU.

[Came to London, Jan. 18th, O. S. Monday;—received at Welbeck, Jan. 21st, Thursday.]

Nov. 29th, N. S. (1747).

DEAREST MADAM,—I received yesterday the most sensible pleasure, by your obliging letter: it is impossible to tell you

what joy the sight of your ladyship's hand gave me, which was very much heightened by the account of your health and continued goodness to me. I believe the air you are in, is the best in England, and I do not doubt but the tranquillity and regularity of your life will re-establish your constitution, which is naturally a very good one, and only hurt by melancholy reflections, which I hope you will never more have any occasion for. It is no diminution of the Dutchess of Portland's merit, to say, you deserve whatever affection she can pay, since those who do their duty can never be too much valued: I sincerely share in the satisfaction you have in seeing that she performs her's to you, it is the clearest proof of her good sense and good mind: may you long be happy in one another! I am glad my daughter enjoys her conversation, which is in every sense an honour and advantage.

I have bought the house I live in, which, I suppose, you will imagine little better than a house of office when I talk of my purchasing, and indeed it has cost me little more than the price of one: but, to say truth, it is not much more than the shell of a palace, which was built not above forty years ago, but the master of it dying before it was quite finished, and falling into hands that had many others, it has been wholly neglected; but being well built, the walls are perfectly sound, and I amuse myself in fitting it up. I will take the liberty of sending your ladyship a plan of it, which is far from magnificent, but I believe you will be of my opinion, that it is one of the most convenient you ever saw. The owners of it looking upon it as only an expense to them, were pleased to part with it for a trifle. I won't make you any excuses for troubling you with this long account of my little affairs; your friendship and good nature, I know, gives you a concern in all that regards Your ladyship's

Ever faithful and affectionate humble servant,

M. W. MONTAGU.

[Came to London, Tuesday April 14th, 1747, O. S.;—came to Welbeck, Thursday April 16th, 1747, O. S.]

Brescia, March 1st, N. S.

DEAREST MADAM,—Your ladyship's obliging letter of January 17th, O. S. came to me yesterday; it gave me great pleasure, and at the same time mortification on reflecting that you should suffer so much uneasiness on my account. I am now (I think I may say) quite recovered, which is almost a miracle, I believe few people of my age ever did, of so severe and so long a fit of sickness. I hope you think me in the right

in leaving Avignon, which is now all full of miserable refugees; France I should not have been permitted to stay in, and I am quiet in a republic that is in our alliance, which is all the present aim that I have. Your ladyship says nothing of your own health, I flatter myself it is good; I beg of you that you will never give yourself any concern about mine. My life is useless to the world, and (almost) tiresome to myself.

I did not know Mrs. Stanton was dead, I have so few correspondents in England that every thing from thence is news to me. I never received your ladyship's letter of August 23rd, which I suppose was owing to my removal. That part of Italy I passed in coming hither, has suffered so much by the war, that it is quite different from when I left it. I wish every Englishman was as sensible as I am, of the terrible effects of arbitrary government, some of the most plentiful parts of the world being reduced to near a famine. This province, which is free from troops, enriches itself by the poverty of its neighbours, which occasions all provisions to be as dear as in England. The carnival here has been very gay and magnificent; I had no share of either, being at that time confined to my chamber, and having no taste for diversions of that nature. In all situations I am ever (dearest madam) with the tenderest affections of my heart,

Your ladyship's most faithful and most obedient servant,

M. W. MONTAGU.

[Came to London, Wednesday July 15th, O.S.;—came to Welbeck, Saturday July 17th, O. S.]

July 1st, Brescia (1747).

DEAREST MADAM,—'T is so long since I have had the honour of hearing from you, that I cannot help being in concern for your health; mine is much mended by the country air, and the great regularity with which I live. I flatter myself it is the fault of the post, that I have not the happiness of hearing from you. I pray for peace on many accounts, but chiefly that our correspondence may become more certain. I can say with truth, 't is the only pleasure of my life, and 't is no small one, to think I have a friend of your merit.

I am told Lord Coke (1) is married to Lady M. Campbell: I knew him when he was at Venice, and believe her economy will be a very necessary allay to the expensiveness of his temper. Mr. Wortley (who is the only correspondent I have in

(1) Edward Lord Coke, only son of Thomas Earl of Leicester, married Mary, daughter of John Duke of Argyll in the spring of 1747.

London except my daughter) tells me you have made Welbeck a very delightful place: it was always so by the situation, I do not doubt of the improvement by your good taste. If wishes had the power of conveying the person, your ladyship would soon see me there, but I fear there is not so much felicity in store for me. God's will be done! wherever I am, I can never be other than, with the tenderest affection,

Your ladyship's most faithful devoted servant,

M. W. MONTAGU.

[Came to London, Monday Oct. 12th, O. S.;—received at Welbeck, Thursday, Oct. 15th, O.S. 1747.]

Brescia, Sept. 1st, N. S.

DEAREST MADAM,—This is the fourth letter I have wrote since I have had the honour of yours, and am in so much pain for your health, that I have little enjoyment in the recovery of my own. I am willing to flatter myself, that your silence is occasioned by the irregularity of the post, which this unhappy war often interrupts: the fear of this never reaching you, puts a great damp on my writing; yet I could not be easy without endeavouring (at least) to give you my repeated assurances of that everlasting affection I shall always feel for your ladyship, which you so highly deserve, and have by so many obligations acquired. I have lived this eight months in the country, after the same manner (in little) that I fancy you do at Welbeck, and find so much advantage from the air and quiet of this retreat, that I do not think of leaving it. I walk and read much, but have very little company except that of a neighbouring convent. I do what good I am able in the village round me, which is a very large one; and have had so much success, that I am thought a great physician, and should be esteemed a saint if I went to mass. My house is a very convenient one, and if I could have your ladyship's dear conversation, I may truly say, my life would be very comfortable: that is a melancholy thought, when I reflect on the impossibility of that happiness being obtained by (dearest madam)

Your most faithfully devoted humble servant.

M. W. MONTAGU.

Be pleased to direct to Brescia par Venise.

[Received at Welbeck, Monday Feb. 27th, 1748, O.S.]

2nd Feb. N. S.

DEAREST MADAM,—I received this day, the 2nd of February N. S., the happiness of your ladyship's obliging letter of De-

cember 17th; it has relieved me from the great anxiety I was under in regard to your health. I have ever done you the justice, (during this long interruption of our correspondence,) of being persuaded you was incapable of forgetting me; or if sometimes my melancholy, joined with a consciousness of my own unworthiness, suggested to me a contrary thought, I presently corrected it, as not suited to that esteem you so well deserve from me. I hope the good air of Welbeck has entirely re-established your health; I should be ungrateful to Heaven to complain of mine, which is indeed better than I have reason to expect. I walk very much, I sometimes ride, I amuse myself with a little garden that I have made out of a vineyard; and if I could enjoy your ladyship's conversation, I should not regret a world in which I never had great pleasure, and have so little inclination to return to, that I do not even intend to see the new court which is expected at Parma, though it is but ten miles from hence.

Dearest madam, continue to me the hònour of writing to me, and be assured that you can bestow your favours on no person who is more sensible of their value than

Your ladyship's most faithfully devoted humble servant,

M. W. MONTAGU.

[Came to London, May 21st, O. S. Saturday;—received at Welbeck, 23rd. O. S. Monday.]

Brescia, April 27th, N. S. (1748).

DEAREST MADAM,—It is so long since I have had the happiness of hearing from you, I cannot forbear writing, tho' perhaps this letter may have the same fate of those that have preceded it. I received one from my daughter but a few days ago, that was dated in September: Mr. Wortley writes me word that she has chang'd her retir'd way or life, and is much in public: I wish it may be to her advantage. I hope the Dutchess of Portland and her family continue in perfect health; I do not fear your ladyship's receiving any trouble from her, if she gives you none by her sickness. The real part I take in every thing that concerns you, gives me a share in evey branch of your prosperity, I have a pleasure in all your improvements at Welbeck, when I hear them commended, tho' I shall never see them: 'tis almost the only attachment I have in this world, being every day (as it is fit I should) more and more wean'd from it. I hope your silence is only occasion'd by the irregularity of the post, which I cannot expect to see reform'd while the war continues. Notwithstanding my indifference for other

things, your friendship and health will ever be tenderly dear to, madam, Your ladyship's most faithfull obedient servant,

M. W MONTAGU.

[Received at Welbeck, Monday June 5th, 1749, O. S.]

26th April, N. S.

DEAREST MADAM,—Tho' I have receivd the happyness of yours of the 25th of January very late, it being now the 26th of April, yet it gave me so much pleasure by the assurance of your health and continu'd goodness to me that I can scarce complain of the delay. My letters have no value but as coming from a heart sincerely yours, truly gratefull and sensible of your merit. I have had some fits of an ague this spring, which distemper has been epidemical in this country from the uncommon rains we have had; I am now very well recover'd, tho' I have not yet ventur'd out of the house, the weather being still wet and raw. I believe it will be safest to send the letters your ladiship honors me with in a cover to Signor Isaac M. de Treves à Venise. I hope your flourishing family still continues in perfect health and prosperity; I hear mine encreases every year, and that my daughter is much distinguish'd by her Royal Highness: (1) I flatter myself that she is always happy in the Dutchess of Portland's friendship, which I look upon as the greatest advantage that she can enjoy in this world. I am entirely a stranger to all other news in England: there is none in which I am so much interested as that of your health, of which I beg to hear often; being ever (dearest madam) with the tenderest affection.

Your ladiship's most faithfull devoted servant,

M. W MONTAGU.

[Received at Welbeck, Thursday Sept. 7th, 1749, O. S.]

Louvere, Aug. 20th, N. S.

I RECEIV'D this morning your ladyship's obliging letter of June 8th: the sight of your hand gave me great pleasure, but the complaints you make of ill health equally alarm'd and griev'd me: I beg of you, dearest madam, not to write when it is troublesome to you; God knows my heart, I would not purchase any happyness at the expense of the least inconvenience to you.

I have been here this month drinking the waters, by advice, having had many returns of the ague; but have found great

(1) The Princess of Wales, mother of George III.

benefit from these waters, and am now in hopes I am entirely quit of it. I think Lady F. Meadows pays very dear for whatever advantages she may gain, but interest is so commonlypreferr'd to honor, I do not doubt her conduct will be applauded by many people. I suppose Thoresby is (at least in part) rebuilt, or I known ot where so many can lodge. My daughter writes me word she has fitted up that house (1) near Hampstead, which I once had the honour to see with your ladyship; I hope it is a proof she is in no want of money. I propose staying here but a few days longer; my love of retirement grows upon me, and 't is my opinion whoever knows the world cannot be very fond of it. It is impossible for me to conclude my letter without recommending to you the care of yourself: it is no compliment, but a plain truth, when I say that your ladyship is the only true friend I ever had in my life; judge therefore how dear you are to (dear madam) Your most affectionate and faithful servant,

M. W. MONTAGU.

[Received at Welbeck, Thursday April 5th, O. S. 1750.]

March 2nd, N. S.

DEAREST MADAM,—I received this day the happiness of two letters you have honoured me with, dated December 23rd and January 6th. I am very glad your health is mended; tho' it is not so well re-established as I could wish, yet I hope time will perfect it. I have passed this winter without any complaint, which I attribute to the waters of Louvere, and am resolved to drink them again in the season. I beg of you, dearest madam, let not your tenderness for me give you any uneasy moments; I could wish, indeed, my destiny had placed me near Welbeck, but then I remember that could not be, without being also near another place, from whence I should often hear accounts that would embitter even your ladyship's conversation. I am more sensible (perhaps) than I ought to be, of the figure my family makes, and often reflect on the happiness of my father, who died without seeing any of the misfortunes that have since happened. I heartily congratulate the satisfaction you express in your hopefull growing children; I pray God continue it, and every other blessing. I think you have a fair prospect in the good sense and good-nature of the Duke and Dutchess of Portland: they cannot give better proof of both, than in a right behaviour to you; it is no more than your due, but in this age 't is an uncommon merit to be just. I hope my daughter will be

(1) Caen Wood, afterwards sold by the Earl of Bute to the great Lord Mansfield.

so far her own friend as to show herself on all occasions one of the Dutchesses humble servants. She sends me such a description of London as would cure me of desiring to see it, if it was my inclination, which, since your ladyship is not there, is no way my wish. Public life is what I was never fond of, and would now become me less than ever: I have always been amazed at the passion for it continuing, as in the late Duchess of Marlbro', and can only attribute it to the flatterers round her, who nourished in her that desire of applause, which is as vain as the endeavours of children that run to catch the rainbow. I need not say this to your ladyship, who, in highly deserving it, has always shunned it; but you have the goodness to permit me to communicate my thoughts to you, and 't is a pleasure to me to show myself eternally, dearest madam,

Your ladyship's devoted humble servant, M. W. MOTAGU.

[Received at Cav. Lodge, Thursday June 21st.]

May 24th, N. S. (1750).

FOR the first time of my life, I have had a kind letter from dear Lady Oxford lye by me four days unanswered; it found me on a sick bed, from which I can scarce say I am risen, since I am up but a few hours in the day; and this is wrote (God knows) with a feeble hand, but I am impatient to thank your ladyship for your unwearyed goodness to me. I have had the severest illness I ever had, and heard sentence of death pronounced against me: I am now told I am out of danger; I will not hurt your tenderness (which I am well acquainted with) by a recital of my sufferings.

Since Lady N. Pawlet (1) would take a boy, I am surprised she has found one with so good an estate; I suppose his father has many other sons, or is not fond of posterity.

May God continue every blessing to you! My weakness obliges me to finish my letter, with the assurance of my being ever, dearest madam,

Your faithfull, obedient servant, M. W. MONTAGU.

I will write again soon if it please God to restore my health.

(1) Lady Isabella Tufton, youngest daughter and co-heir of Thomas sixth Earl of Thanet, widow of Lord Nassau Pawlet, son of Charles second Duke of Bolton, by his third wife Henrietta Crofts, youngest natural daughter of James Scott Duke of Monmouth, by Eleanor, youngest daughter of Sir Robert Needham of Lambeth. Lord N. Pawlet died in 1741; she married secondly Francis Blake Delaval, afterwards Knight of the Bath, eldest son of Francis Blake Delaval, of Seaton Delaval in the county of Northumberland, Esq.

LETTERS

TO

SIR JAMES AND LADY FRANCES STEUART.(1)

TO SIR JAMES AND LADY FRANCES STEUART.

[Indorsed by Lady Frances Steuart, "May 1758, from Venice to Padua, —the first letter after parting with her ladyship and coming to Padua."]

I AM in great pain both for your health and situation, and wish you would permit me to be of any service to you. I know what it is to be without servants in a strange cou ntry, and how far people are imposed on that bear the name of English and heretics into the bargain; the folly of British boys, and stupidity or knavery of governors, have gained us the glorious title of Golden Asses all over Italy. I never was in the Padua locanda, but except they are more virtuous than any I ever met with, you will be very ill served and very well robbed. Here is a fellow recommended to me by Baron Talmua, who says he will answer for his honesty and capacity; he can serve as cook, valet de chambre, purveyor, and steward; he speaks no German, but is very willing to follow you, and presumes he shall soon learn it. I think recommending servants almost as dangerous as making matches, (which, I thank the Lord, I never engaged in): nothing could oblige me to venture on it but your distress, and the good opinion I have of the probity of Baron Talmua, who is a German man of quality I have known some time and am obliged to. He has earnestly pressed me to

(1) The following was written by Lady Frances Steuart upon the parcel containing these letters.

"Letters from Lady Mary W. Montague, which are decisive of the short acquaintance necessary to the adhesion which generally takes place when superior minds are brought together. Lady M. W. Montague was blessed with such a mind as led her to make a short (very short) acquaintance with my dear Sir James become to her a time of noted value. They reciprocally improved it, and neither of them ever lost the recollections which were so gratifying to both.

"Nor can I ever forget the thankful sensibility of the time, which appeared to me so fortunate, so fit, and so *apropos* to enliven (and very highly) his elevated but dejected spirit—feeble and dejected by a severe illness."

make you this offer, on hearing me lament the seduction of your woman.

This minute I am shown a letter of my Gastaldi, (in French, Concierge; I know no proper title for him in English). I can assure you, sir and madam, his *stile grossier* gave me more pleasure than ever I received from the points of Voiture or the puns of Swift or Pope, since my secretary assured me that it contained an account of your well being, and having honoured my mansion with your presence; he brags of having done his duty in waiting on the two milordi; and that you found the palazzo very clean; and he hopes you took nothing ill, tho' you refused the portantina. In this manner were his hieroglyphics explained to me, which I am forced and pleased to give faith to, as I do to the translators of Hebrew, tho' I can make nothing of the figures myself. I have read over your book, Sir James, and have a great deal to say about it, tho' nothing to object; but must refer to another time; having literally six people in the room according to their laudable custom, talking all at once, I hardly know what I say, but I know what I think; that I will get to Padua as fast as I can, to enjoy the best company I ever knew.

[Note indorsed by Lady Frances Steuart, "From Venice to Padua, when we were with her ladyship."]

HERE is predestination in abundance; I am not born to be happy; perhaps nobody can be so without great allays,—all philosophers, ancient and modern, agree in that sentiment. I cannot come to you for reasons I will whisper to Lady Fanny, and I dare not accept your company for fear of affecting Sir James's health, which is more precious to me than to any body, alwaies excepting sua amabilissima consorte.(1)

[Indorsed by Lady Frances Steuart, "Venice, where we made acquaintance with her ladyship."]

THIS letter will be solely to you, and I desire you (2) will not communicate it to Lady Fanny: she is the best woman in the

(1) The original spelling has been copied in all these letters, except in the termination *ed*, which Lady Mary always wrote thus, *'d*; as refus'd, admir'd, serv'd. She spelt ho*nor*, fa*vor*, etc. in the modern way (disapproved by Dr. Johnson.) It was a peculiarity of her own to say *five*teen for fifteen: possibly she thought the number ought to be given at length, like *six*teen, *seventeen*, etc.

(2) This is clearly said in joke.

world, and I would by no means make her uneasy; but there will be such strange things in it that the Talmud or the revelations are not half so mysterious: what these prodigies portend, God knows; but I never should have suspected half the wonders I see before my eyes, and am convinced of the necessity of the repeal of the witch act (as it is commonly called), I mean, to speak correctly, the tacit permission given to witches, so scandalous to all good Christians: though I tremble to think of it for my own interests. It is certain the British islands have always been strangely addicted to this diabolical intercourse, of which I dare swear you know many instances; but since this public encouragement given to it, I am afraid there will not be an old woman in the nation entirely free from suspicion. The devil rages more powerfully than ever: you will believe me when I assure you, the great and learned English minister is turned methodist, several duels have been fought in the Place of St. Marc for the charms of his excellent lady, and I have been seen flying in the air in the figure of Julian Cox, (1) whose history is related with so much candour and truth by the pious pen of Joseph Glanville, chaplain to K. Charles. I know you young rakes make a jest of all those things, but I think no good lady can doubt of a relation so well attested. She was about seventy years old (very near my age), and the whole sworn to before Judge Archer, 1663: very well worth reading, but rather too long for a letter. You know (wretch that I am) 'tis one of my wicked maxims to make the best of a bad bargain; and I have said publicly that every period of life has its privileges, and that even the most despicable creatures alive may find some pleasures. Now observe this comment; who are the most despicable creatures? Certainly, old women. What pleasure can an old woman take? Only witchcraft. I think this argument as clear as any of the devout Bishop of Cloyne's metaphysics: this being decided in a full congregation of saints, only such atheists as you and Lady Fanny can deny it. I own all the facts, as many witches have done before me, and go every night in a public manner astride upon a black cat to a meeting where you are suspected to appear: this last article is not sworn to, it being doubtfull in what manner our clandestine midnight correspondence is carried on. Some think it treasonable, others lewd (don't tell Lady Fanny); but all agree there was something very odd and unaccountable in such sud-

(1) In one of her letters to Lady Bute she dwells on the same idea. All this must allude in some way to her quarrel with Mr. Murray, the Resident, and to the reports which she accused him of spreading concerning her.

den likings. I confess, as I said before, it is witchcraft. You won't wonder I do not sign (notwithstanding all my impudence) such dangerous truths: who knows the consequence? The devil is said to desert his votaries.

P. S. Fribourg, who you enquire after so kindly, is turned *beau garçon*, and actually kept by the fine lady in Venice; Doctor Moxo robs on the highway, and Antonio sings at the opera. Would you desire better witchcraft? This to be continued.

Nota bene. You have dispossessed me of the real devils who haunted me. I mean the nine Muses.(1)

TO LADY FRANCES STEUART.

[Indorsed "Padua, September 7th, 1758; the first letter after leaving her at Padua to go back to Tubingen."]

MY DEAR LADY FANNY,—I have been some time in pain for your silence, and at last begun to fear that either some accident had befallen you, or you had been so surfeited with my *dullness* at Padua, you resolved not to be plagued with it when at a distance. These melancholy ideas growing strong upon me, I wrote to Mr. Duff to inquire after your health. I have received his answer this morning; he tells me you are both well and safely arrived at Tubingen; and I take the liberty to put you in mind of one that can never forget you and the chearful hours we have passed together. The weather favoured you according to your prayers; since that time we have had storms, tempests, pestilential blasts, and at this moment such suffocating heat, the doctor is sick in bed, and nobody in health in my family, excepting myself and my Swiss servants, who support our constitutions by hearty eating and drinking, while the poor Italians are languishing on their salads and limonade. I confess I am in high spirits, having succeeded in my endeavour to get a promise of assisting some very worthy people whom I am fond of. You know I am enthusiastic in my friendships. I also hear from all hands of my daughter's prosperity; you, madam, that are a mother, may judge of my pleasure in her happiness: tho' I have no taste for that sort of felicity. I could

(1) It seems almost needless to observe that this letter is written in a spirit of jesting, or, to use a lower word, of *fun*. *Antonio*, or Signor Antonio Mocenigo being mentioned elsewhere as eighty-six years of age, and the head of a great Venetian family, we may conclude that what is said of the two other persons named was as ludicrously impossible as his singing at the opera.

never endure with tolerable patience the austerities of a court life. I was saying every day from my heart, (while I was condemned to it,) "the things that I would do, those I do not, and the things I would not do, those do I daily," and I had rather be a sister of St. Clara than lady of the bedchamber to any queen in Europe. It is not age and disappointment that has given me these sentiments; you may see them in a copy of verses sent from Constantinople in my early youth to my uncle Fielding, (1) and by his (well intended) indiscretion shown about copies taken, and at length miserably printed. I own myself such a rake, I prefer liberty to chains of diamonds, and when I hold my peace (like K. David) it is pain and grief to me.

No fraud the poet's sacred breast can bear,
Mild are our manners and our hearts sincere.
Rude and unpolished in the courtier's school,
I loathe a knave and tremble at a fool.

With this rusticity of manners I do not wonder to see my company avoided by all great men and fine ladies. I could tell your ladyship such a history of my calamities since we parted, you will be surprised to hear I have not despaired and died like the sick lion in Æsop's fables, who so pathetically cries out—*Bis videor mori*, when he was kicked by a certain animal I will not name because it is very like a paw word. *Vale!*

Padoua, Sept. 4, San Massimo.

I desire this letter (innocent as it is) may be burnt. All my works are consecrated to the fire for fear of being put to more ignoble uses, as their betters have been before them. I beg an immediate answer.

A MONSIEUR MONSIEUR LE CHEVALIER STEUART,

à Tubingen, en Suabe.

[Indorsed "Sep. 5, 1758; the 2nd to Tubingen from Padua."]

SIR,—On the information of Mr. Duff that you had certainly wrote tho' I had not been so happy to receive your letter, I thought (God forgive the vanity!) that perhaps I was important enough to have my letters stopped, and immediately sent you a long scrawl without head or tail, which, I am afraid, is scarce intelligible, if ever it arrives.

This day, Sep. 5th, I have had the pleasure of a most agreeable and obliging mark of your remembrance; but as it has no date, I neither know when nor from whence it was written.

(1) Vide vol. i. p. 357.

I am extremely sorry for dear Lady Fanny's disorder. I could repeat to her many wise sayings of ancients and moderns, which would be of as much service to her as a present of embroidered slippers to you when you have a fit of the gout. I have seen so much of hysterical complaints, tho' Heaven be praised I never felt them, I know it is an obstinate and very uneasy distemper, tho' never fatal, unless when quacks undertake to cure it. I have even observed that those who are troubled with it commonly live to old age. Lady Stair (1) is one instance; I remember her screaming and crying when Miss Primrose, myself, and other girls were dancing two rooms distant. Lady Fanny has but a slight touch of this distemper: read Dr. Sydenham, you will find the analyses of that and many other diseases, with a candor I never found in any other author. I confess I never had faith in any other physician, living or dead. Mr. Locke places him in the same rank with Sir Isaac Newton, and the Italians call him the English Hipocrates. I own I am charmed with his taking off the reproach which you men so saucily throw on our sex, as if we alone were subject to vapours: he clearly proves that your wise, honourable spleen is the same disorder and arises from the same cause; but you vile usurpers do not only engross learning, power, and authority to yourselves, but will be our superiors even in constitution of mind, and fancy you are incapable of the woman's weakness of fear and tenderness. Ignorance! I could produce such examples—

> Show me that man of wit in all your roll,
> Whom some one woman has not made a fool.

I beg your pardon for these verses, but I have a right to scribble all that comes at my pen's end, being in high spirits on an occasion more interesting to me than the election of popes or emperors. His present Holiness (2) is not much my acquaintance, but his family have been so since my first arrival at Venice, 1740. His father died only last winter, and was a very agreeable worthy man, killed by a doctor; his mother rather suffered life than enjoyed it after the death of her husband, and was little sensible of the advancement of her son, tho' I believe it made a greater impression on her than ap-

(1) The Lady Stair here alluded to, was probably the wife of the third Earl of Stair, eldest daughter of Sir Andrew Myrton, of Gogar, in the county of Edinburgh, Baronet. She died at Edinburgh, July 8th 1761, at sixty-two.

(2) Cardinal Charles Rezzonia, Bishop of Padua, became Pope Clement XIII. 16th July 1758, and died in 1769.

peared, and it may be, hastened her death; which happened a fortnight after his elevation, in the midst of the extraordinary rejoicings at Venice on that occasion. The honours bestowed on his brother, the balls, festivals, etc., are they not written in the daily books called newspapers?

I resisted all invitations, and am still at Padua, where reading, writing, riding, and walking find me full employment.

I accept the compliment of the fine young gentleman with the joy of an old woman who does not expect to be taken notice of: pray don't tell him I am an old woman. He shall be my toast from this forward, and (provided he never sees me as long as he lives) I may be his. *A propos* of toasting, upon my honour I have not tasted a drop of punch since we parted; I cannot bear the sight of it; it would recall too tender ideas, and I should be quarrelling with Fortune for our separation, when I ought to thank her divinity for having brought us together. I could tell a long story of princes and potentates, but I am so little versed in state affairs I will not so much as answer your ensnaring question concerning the Jesuits, which is meddling at once with church and state.

This letter is of a horrible length, and what is worse (if any worse can be) such a rhapsody of nonsense as may kill poor Lady Fanny, now she is low-spirited, tho' I am persuaded she has good nature enough to be glad to hear I am happy; which I could not be, if I had not a view of seeing my friends so. As to you, sir I make no excuses; you are bound to have indulgence for me, as for a sister of the quill. I have heard Mr. Addison say he always listened to poets with patience, to keep up the dignity of the fraternity. Let me have an answer as soon as possible. *Si vales, bene est, valeo.*

P.S. Do not be offended at the word poet, it sliped out unawares. I know you scorn it, tho' it has been dignified by Lord Sommers, Lord Godolphin, and Dr. Atterbury.

TO LADY FRANCES STEUART.

[Indorsed "From Venice, Oct. 5th."]

I AM exceedingly delighted, my dear Lady Fanny, to hear of the recovery of your health and spirits: if my prayers or endeavours prevail, you will never have any thing to displease you; 'tis the height of my ambition to serve my friends, and their number is so very small, I may hope to succeed without aiming at any great degree of power. My daughter shall be informed of your favourable opinion; she has already all the

esteem for your ladyship that your merit exacts from all that know you. Alas, madam! you talk at your ease of two or three years hence; I hardly extend my views to so many weeks, and cannot flatter myself with the hope of seeing you again: I have not your satisfaction less at heart, and am persuaded that I shall be succeeded in my desire to serve you when I shall no longer be capable of giving thanks for it. I am very sorry for Lord Garlies's loss of his brother; (1) and heartily wish seven or eight more might arise from his ashes.

The magnificent rejoicings for the Pope's elevation are not yet over: there was last night very fine fire-works before the Palace Rezzonico: I suppose the newspapers have given an account of the regatta, etc. You may be sure I have very little share in the night diversions, which generally begin at the hour I undress for bed. Here are few English this carnival, and those few extremely engaged in parties of pleasure, which, ten to one, they will never forget to their dying day.——Permit me, dear madam, to address myself to Sir James. I can assure you, sir, I am sincerely grieved at the return of your disorder. You would think me too interested if I recommended a warm climate. I confess self-love will mix even imperceptibly in all our sentiments, yet I verily believe a northern air cannot be good either for you or Lord Marischall. (2) I am very much obliged to him for remembering a useless friend and servant: my good wishes, with a grateful sense of his civilities, always attend him. I expect with impatience the present you have promised me; it would have been always agreeable, but is particularly so now, when I am in a great town almost as solitary as in a desert. All my pleasures are recollections of those past; there are (I think) some refined metaphysicians that assert they are the only realities. I agree they are highly pleasing with a dash of hope to enliven them; but in my melancholy case, when all my prospects are as bounded as those from a window against a dead wall——I will not go on in this dismal strain. I wish the post would suffer me to entertain you with some ridiculous farces exhibited by my loving countrymen: even that is denied me from prudential considerations. Nothing can hinder my being to my last moment faithfully attached to Lady Frances and yourself.

(1) The Honourable George Stewart, son of the sixth Earl of Galloway, was killed at Ticonderago, in 1758.

(2) George, tenth Earl Marischal, born in 1693, served under the Great Frederic, and died at Potsdam, May 28th 1778.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

[Indorsed "From Venice, May 4th, 1757."]

You will not be surprised, sir, that after having been promised so valuable and so agreeable a present, I am a little impatient to receive it; there is no situation in which it would not be highly welcome, but it is doubly so in a town where I am almost as solitary as in a desert. I am extremely concerned at the continuation of Lady Fanny's disorder; the juvenile dissipations of Mr. Steuart I do not put into the list of misfortunes; application is not to be expected at his age; perhaps not to be wished; the judgment must have time to ripen, and when the gaieties of early youth are over, you will see that solidity more firm than if it had appeared prematurely. I am persuaded that you will find him turn out every thing you wish, and that he will repay the care of his education by a conduct worthy of such parents.

Here is a fashion sprung up entirely new in this part of the world; I mean suicide: a rich parish priest and a young Celestine monk have disposed of themselves last week in that manner without any visible reason for their precipitation. The priest, indeed, left a paper in his hat to signify his desire of imitating the indifference of Socrates and magnanimity of Cato: the friar swung out of the world without giving any account of his design. You see it is not in Britain alone that the spleen spreads his dominion. I look on all excursions of this kind to be owing to that distemper, which shows the necessity of seeking employment for the mind, and exercise for the body; the spirits and the blood stagnate without motion.

You are to be envied whose studies are not only usefull to yourself but beneficial to mankind; even mine (good for nothing as they are) contribute to my health, and serve at least to lull asleep those corroding reflections that embitter life, and wear out the frail machine in which we inhabit.

I enclose a letter from Mr. Duff, in which (he tells me) he has directed in what manner I may receive your Enquiry into the principles of Political Economy. I do not doubt enjoying great pleasure and instruction in the reading of it, tho' I want no fresh inducement to bind me ever, sir,

Your most obliged and affectionate servant, M. W. M.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

[Dated July 19, 1759, from Padua; begun in another hand.]

YOUR letters always give me a great deal of pleasure, but particularly this, which has relieved me from the pain I was in from your silence.

I have seen the Margrave of Baden Dourlach; but I hope he has forgot he has ever seen me, being at that time in a very odd situation, of which I will not give you the history at present, being a long story, and you know life is too short for a long story.

I am extremely obliged for the valuable present you intend me. I believe you criticize yourself too severely on your style: I do not think that very smooth harmony is necessary in a work which has a merit of a nobler kind; I think it rather a defect, as when a Roman Emperor (as we see him sometimes represented on a French stage) is dressed like a petit-maître. I confess the croud of readers look no farther; the tittle-tattle of Madame de Sévigné, and the *clinquant* of Telemachus, have found admirers from that very reason. Whatever is clearly expressed, is well wrote in a book of reasoning. However, I shall obey your commands in telling you my opinion with the greatest sincerity.

I am extremely glad to hear that Lady F. has overcome her disorder: I wish I had no apprehensions of falling into it. Solitude begets whimsies; at my time of life one usually falls into those that are melancholy, tho' I endeavour to keep up a certain sprightly folly that (I thank God) I was born with: but, alas! what can we do with all our endeavours! I am afraid we are little better than straws upon the water; we may flatter ourselves that we swim, when the current carries us along.

Thus far I have dictated for the first time of my life, and perhaps it will be the last, for my amanuensis is not to be hired, and I despair of ever meeting with another. He is the first that cou'd write as fast as I talk, and yet you see there are so many mistakes, it wants a comment longer than my letter to explain my insignificant meaning, and I have fatigued my poor eyes more with correcting it, than I should have done in scribbling two sheets of paper. You will think perhaps, from this idle attempt, that I have some fluxion on my sight; no such matter; I have suffered myself to be persuaded by such sort of arguments as those by which people are induced to strict abstinence, or to take physic. Fear, paltry fear, founded on vapours rising from the heat, which is now excessive, and has

so far debilitated my miserable nerves that I submit to a present displeasure, by way of precaution against a future evil, that possibly may never happen. I have this to say in my excuse, that the evil is of so horrid a nature, I own I feel no philosophy that could support me hunder it, and no mountain girl ever trembled more at one of Whitfield's pathetic lectures than I do at the word blindness, tho' I know all the fine things that may be said for consolation in such a case: but I know also they would not operate on my constitution. "Why," (say my wise monitors,) "will you persist in reading or writing seven hours in a day?" "I am happy while I read and write." "Indeed one would suffer a great deal to be happy," say the men, sneering; and the ladies wink at each other, and hold up their fans. A fine lady of threescore had the goodness to add, "At least, madam, you should use spectacles, I have used them myself these twenty years: I was advised to it by a famous oculist when I was fifteen. I am really of opinion that they have preserved my sight, notwithstanding the passion I always had both for reading and drawing." This good woman, you must know, is half blind, and never read a larger volume than a newspaper. I will not trouble you with the whole conversation, tho' it would make an excellent scene in a farce; but after they had in the bestbred way in the world convinced me that they thought I lied when I talked of reading without glasses, the foresaid matron obligingly said she should be very proud to see the writing I talked of, having heard me say formerly I had no correspondents but my daughter and Mr. W.(1) She was interrupted by her sister, who said, simpering, "You forgot Sir J. S." I took her up something short, I confess, and said in a dry stern tone, "Madam, I do write to Sir J. S. and will do it as long as he will permit that honour." This rudeness of mine occasioned a pro.ound silence for some minutes, and they fell into a good-natured discourse of the ill consequences of too much application, and remembered how many apoplexies, gouts, and dropsies had happened amongst the hard students of their acquaintance. As I never studied any thing in my life, and have always (at least from fifteen,) thought the reputation of learning a misfortune to a woman, I was resolved to believe these stories were not meant at me: I grew silent in my turn, and took up a card that lay on a table, and amused myself with smoking it over a candle. In the mean time (as the song says),

(1) Wortley.

Their tattles all run, as swift as the sun,
Of who had won, and who was undone
By their gaming and sitting up late.

When it was observed I entered into none of these topics, I was addressed by an obliging lady, who pitied my stupidity. "Indeed, madam, you should buy horses to that fine machine you have at Padoua; of what use is it standing in the portico?" "Perhaps," said another, wittily, "of as much use as a standing dish." A gaping school-boy added with still more wit, "I have seen at a country gentleman's table a venison-pasty made of wood." I was not at all vexed by said school-boy, not because he was (in more senses than one) the highest of the company, but knowing he did not mean to offend me. I confess (to my shame be it spoken) I was grieved at the triumph that appeared in the eyes of the king and queen of the company, the court being tolerably full. His majesty walked off early with the air befitting his dignity, followed by his train of courtiers, who, like courtiers, were laughing amongst themselves as they followed him: and I was left with the two queens, one of whom was making ruffles for the man she loved, and the other slopping tea, for the good of her country. They renewed their generous endeavours to set me right, and I (graceless beast that I am) take up the smoked card which lay before me, and with the corner of another wrote—

If ever I one thought bestow
On what such fools advise,
May I be dull enough to grow
Most miserably wise.

And flung down the card on the table, and myself out of the room, in the most indecent fury. A few minutes on the cold water convinced me of my folly, and I went home as much mortified as my Lord E. when he has lost his last stake at hazard. Pray don't think (if you can help it) this is an affectation of mine to enhance the value of a talent I would be thought to despise; as celebrated beauties often talk of the charms of good sense, having some reason to fear their mental qualities are not quite so conspicuous as their outside lovely form.—*A propos* of beauties:

I know not why, but Heaven has sent this way
A nymph, fair, kind, poetical, and gay;
And what is more, (tho' I express it dully,)
A noble, wise, right honourable cully;

A soldier worthy of the name he bears,
As brave and senseless as the sword he wears.

You will not doubt I am talking of a puppetshow; and indeed so I am; but the figures (some of them) bigger than the life, and not stuffed with straw like those commonly shown at fairs. I will allow you to think me madder than Don Quixote when I confess I am governed by the *que dira-t-on* of these things, tho' I remember where of they are made, and know they are but dust. Nothing vexes me so much as that they are below satyr. (Between you and me) I think there are but two pleasures permitted to mortal man, love and vengeance; both which are, in a peculiar manner, forbidden to us wretches who are condemned to petticoats. Even vanity itself, of which you daily accuse us, is the sin against the Holy Ghost not to be forgiven in this world or the next.

Our sex's weakness you expose and blame,
Of every prating fop the common theme;
Yet from this weakness you suppose is due
Sublimer virtue than your Cato knew.
From whence is this unjust distinction shown?
Are we not formed with passions like your own?
Nature with equal fire our souls endued;
Our minds as lofty, and as warm our blood.
O'er the wide world your wishes you pursue,
The change is justified by something new:
But we must sigh in silence and be true.

How the great Dr. Swift would stare at this vile triplet! And then what business have I to make apologies for Lady Vane, (1) who I never spoke to, because her life is writ by Dr. Smollett, who I never saw? Because my daughter fell in love with Lord B., (2) am I obliged to fall in love with the whole Scots' nation? 'T is certain I take their quarrels upon myself in a very odd way; and I cannot deny that (two or three dozen excepted) I think they make the first figure in all arts and sciences; even in gallantry, in spite of the finest gentlemen that have finished their education at Paris.

You will ask me what I mean by all this nonsense? After having declared myself an enemy to obscurity to such a degree that I do not forgive it to the great Lord Viscount Bolingbroke, who professes he studied it. I dare swear you will sincerely

(1) This lady has been alluded to before in these letters. She was second daughter of Mr. Hawes, a South Sea Director, of Purley, in Berkshire, and was twice married; first, to Lord William Hamilton, and secondly to William second Viscount Vane, only son of William Viscount Vane, and Baron of Duncannon, in the county of Tyrone. (2) Bute.

believe him when you read his celebrated works. I have got them for you, and intended to bring them. *Oime! l'huomo propone, Dio dispone.* I hope you won't think this dab of Italian, that slid involuntarily from my pen, an affectation like his Gallicisms, or a rebellion against Providence, in imitation of his lordship, who I never saw but once in my life: he then appeared in a corner of the drawing-room, in the exact similitude of Satan when he was soliciting the court of Heaven for leave to torment an honest man.

There is one honest man lately gone off the stage, which (considering the great scarcity of them) I am heartily sorry for: Dr. J—, who died at Rome with as much stoicism as Cato at Utica, and less desperation, leaving a world he was weary of with the cool indifference you quit a dirty inn to continue your journey to a place where you hope for better accommodation. He took part of a bowl of punch with some Englishmen of my acquaintance the day before his death, and told them with a firm tone of voice, "by G— he was going." I am afraid neither Algarotti nor Valsinura will make their exit with so good a grace. I shall rejoice them both by letting them know you honour them with a place in your memory, when I see them; which I have not done since you left Padoua. Algarotti is at Bologna, I believe, composing panegyrics on whoever is victor in this uncertain war; and Valsinura gone to make a tour to add to his collection. Which do you think the best employed? I confess I am woman enough to think the naturalist who searches after variegated butterflies, or even the lady who adorns her grotto with shades of shells, nay, even the devout people who spend twenty years in making a magnificent *presepio* at Naples, throw away time in a more rational manner than any hero, ancient or modern; the lofty Pindar, who celebrated the Newmarket of those days, or the divine Homer, who recorded the bloody battles the most in fashion, appear to me either to have been extremely mistaken or extremely mercenary.

This paragraph is to be a dead secret between Lady F. and yourself. You see I dare trust you with the knowledge of all my defects in understanding. Mine is so stupified by age and disappointment, I own I have lost all taste for worldly glory. This is partly your fault: I experienced last year how much happiness may be found with two amiable friends at a *leger repas*, and 't is as hard to return to political or galant conversations, as it would be for a fat prelate to content himself with the small beer he drank at college. You have furnished me with a new set of notions; you ought to be punished for it:

and I fancy you will (at least in your heart) be of opinion that I have very well revenged myself by this tedious unconnected letter. Indeed, I intend no such thing, and have only indulged the pleasure every body naturally feels when they talk to those they love; as I sincerely do to yourself, and dear Lady F., and your young man, because he is yours.

Note.—In this letter "the king and queen" apparently mean Mr. and Mrs. Murray, the English Resident at Venice and his wife, with whom Lady Mary was on the worst terms imaginable.

A MONSIEUR MONSIEUR LE CHEVALIER STEUART,

à Tubingen, en Suabe.

Venice, Oct. 13, 1759.

You have made (what I did not think possible) writing to you uneasy to me. After confessing that you barbarously criticize on my letters, I have much ado to summon up courage enough to set pen to paper. Can you answer this to your conscience, to sit gravely and maliciously to examine lines written with rapidity and sent without reading over? This is worse than surprising a fine lady just sat down to the toilet: I am content to let you see my mind undressed, but I will not have you so curiously remark the defects in it. To carry on the simile, when a beauty appears with all her graces and airs adorned for a ball, it is lawful to censure whatever you see amiss in her ornaments; but when you are received to a friendly breakfast, 'tis downright cruelty or (something worse) ingratitude, to view too nicely all the disorder you may see. I desire you would sink the critic in the friend, and never forget that I do not write to you and dear Lady Fanny from my head but from my heart. I wish her joy on the continuance of her taste for punch, but I am sure she will agree with me that the zest of good company is very necessary to give it a flavour: to her it is a vivifying nectar, to me it would be insipid river-water, and chill the spirits it should raise, by reflecting on the cheerful moments we once passed together, which can no more return. This thought is so very disagreeable, I will put it as far from me as possible. My chief study all my life has been to lighten misfortunes, and multiply pleasures, as far as human nature can: when I have nothing to find in myself from which I can extract any kind of delight, I think on the happiness of my friends, and rejoice in the joy with which you converse together, and look on the beautiful young plant from which you may so reasonably expect honour and felicity. In other days I

think over the comic scenes that are daily exhibited on the great stage of the world for my entertainment. I am charmed with the account of the Moravians, who certainly exceed all mankind in absurdity of principles and madness of practice; yet this people walk erect, and are numbered amongst rational beings. I imagined after three thousand years' working at creeds and theological whimsies, there remained nothing new to be invented; I see the fund is inexhaustible, and we may say of folly what Horace has said of vice:

Ætas parentum, pejor avis, tulit
Nos nequiores, mox daturos
Progeniem vitiosiorem.

I will not ask pardon for this quotation; it is God's mercy I did not put it into English: when one is haunted (as I am) by the Dæmon of Poesie, it must come out in one shape or another, and you will own that nobody shows it to more advantage than the author I have mentioned. Adieu, sir, read with candour; forgive what you can't excuse, in favour of the real esteem and affection with which I am Lady Fanny's and your most humble servant,

M. W. M.

Permit my compliments to Mr. Steuart.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

[Indorsed "4th letter from Venice to Tubingen."]

Nov. 27th, 1759.

I FLATTER myself my last rhapsody has revenged me of all your criticisms and railleries (however finely spread). I defy you to decipher the true meaning, yet it is truth at the bottom; but not to teize you too much with the marvellous adventures of a town with which you are yet little acquainted, and perhaps not very curious to examine, at least that part of it called—*Gli forestieri e ministri dei Grandi—Basti.*—I read the news of the D. of Marlbro's (1) death with all the sentiments of a true Briton touched with the misfortunes of his country.

(1) Charles Spencer, Duke of Marlborough, was the second son of Lady Sunderland. He succeeded to the title of Earl of Sunderland on the death of his elder brother Robert, and to the dukedom of Marlborough upon that of his aunt Henrietta Duchess of Marlborough, whose only son, Lord Blandford, died before her. The Duke's profuseness and carelessness of his affairs were remarkable; but Lady Mary Wortley might perhaps be the more severe upon him, because he had been at open war with her old friend, his grandmother, the Duchess Sarah, some of whose prejudices she allowed to influence her opinions.

I confess the writer of the English newspaper (which I have seen by making interest with the secretary of his Excellency) has taken all laudable pains to soften the affliction of his readers, by making such a panegyric as would force a smile from Heraclitus himself; he assures us that his dowager and children have cried bitterly, and that both his sons-in-law and many other people of the first quality will wear mourning on this sad occasion. Had I been worthy to have been consulted by this well-pensioned author, I would have added with great truth that more sincere tears have been shed for his loss, than for all the heroes departed for this last century; God knows how many breaking tradespeople and honest scriveners and usurers are breaking their hearts for this untimely fall.

They may be false who languish and complain,
But they who sigh for money never feign.

I beg pardon for this verse, but the subject is too elevated for prose: I dare swear there are at least fifty elegies (besides the bellman's) already presented to his wretched consort and mourning heir. The younger sons, I am sure, grieve from their souls, unless their brother will generously, I don't say promise, (a promise is cold comfort,) solidly settle such a provision as he is no way obliged to, and may possibly forget.

I adore the conduct of the heroic Countess; her amusements are worthy the generosity of a great soul; she knows how to put men to the right use.—

Their thanks she neither asks nor needs
For all the favours done;
From her love flows, as light proceeds
Spontaneous from the sun.

If I really was so skilled in magic as I am generally supposed, I would immediately follow her footsteps in the figure of fair fifteen, acknowledge the errors of my past life, and beg her instructions how to behave to that tyrannical sex, who with absurd cruelty first put the invaluable deposit of their precious honor in our hands, and then oblige us to prove a negative for the preservation of it. I hate mankind with all the fury of an old maid, (indeed most women of my age do,) and have no real esteem but for those heroines who give them as good as they bring.

I have serious thoughts of coming to Tubingen this spring. I shall have the pleasure of seeing friends I truly esteem, and enjoying conversation that I both respect and love. Beside the advantage of being casually admitted in the train of Madame de *B, née O.* I confess I don't deserve it after the stupid

English way in which I received her advances; I own my sins of omission, but am a true convert to her merit, for reasons that I believe you will think good if I am so happy to see you again.——This minute brings me a long letter from my little gentlewoman at court. She gives me such an account of the late D. of M.'s (1) affairs as takes away all doubt of his well-being in the next world. He is certainly eminently distinguished amongst the babes and sucklings: to say truth, I never could perceive (though I was well acquainted with him) that he had the least tincture of the original sin; you know that was the distinction of good and evil, of which whole crowds are entirely clear, and it has been water thrown away to christen them. I have been tempted formerly to turn quaker on this sole argument.

I am extremely sorry for any affliction that has befallen Lord M.; both he and myself have had disappointments enough in life to be hardened against most sensations: I own the loss of a beloved deserving friend is the hardest trial of philosophy. But we are soon to lose ourselves, a melancholy consolation, yet not so melancholy as it may appear to people who have more extensive views in prospect.

Dear Lady Fanny, this letter is to you both, designed to make you smile, laugh if you will; but be so just as to believe me, with warm affection and sincere esteem,

Ever yours, M. W. M.

N.B. You are obliged to me for the shortness of this epistle: when I write to you, I could write all day with pleasure, but I will not indulge even a pleasure at the expense of giving you trouble. If my paper and your patience was not at an end, I would say something to Mr. Steuart.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

[Indorsed "February 1760."]

Sir,—I have waited (in my opinion) with very exemplary patience for your manuscripts; I have not yet received them, but will not longer delay my thanks for your obliging and agreeable letter. I am apt to believe Lord H. may be sincere in saying he is willing to serve you: how far he can be useful is, I think, dubious; you know he is only a subaltern officer. I wish I knew any probable method of insuring success to your wishes; you may certainly depend on every thing that can be

(1) Marlborough.

done towards it, either by my own or the interest of those whom I can influence.

If I considered merely my own inclinations, I should advise the air of this town, since the physicians are of opinion that the sea would be salutary to your constitution. I dare not press this earnestly, finding myself highly prejudiced where my own happiness is so nearly concerned; yet I can with truth assure you that yours shall always have the first place, and, was it in my power, (notwithstanding the real pleasure of such excellent conversation,) I would give up all hopes of it, and immediately transport you and Lady Fanny to your native country, where I am persuaded the pleasure of seeing your household Lares, and having your friends round you, would certainly contribute to your health, if not totally restore it. I heartily congratulate you on your happiness in the growing improvements of Mr. Steuart: it is perhaps the most pleasing employment in life to form a young mind well-disposed to receive instruction; when a parent's care is returned with gratitude and compliance, there is no conqueror or legislator that receives such sincere satisfaction. I have not seen the histories you mention, nor have had for this twelvemonth any books from England. It is difficult to send any thing from thence, as my daughter informs me; and our travelling young gentlemen very seldom burden themselves with such unnecessary baggage as works of literature.

Give me leave to send my warmest thanks to Lady Fanny for her kind remembrance, and compliments to the young gentleman, who I hope will always be a blessing to you both. It is extreme mortifying to me that I have no better way of expressing how much I am, sir,

Your most obliged and very humble servant,

Venice, Feb. 13, 1760. M. W. MONTAGU.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

I HAVE at length received your valuable and magnificent present. You will have me give my opinion; I know not how to do it without your accusing me of flattery (though I am sure no other person would suspect it). It is hard to forbear praising where there is so much due; yet I would rather talk of your performance to any other than yourself. If I durst speak out, I would say, that you have explained in the best manner the most difficult subject, and struck out new lights that are necessary to enforce conviction even to those who have studied the points you treat; and who are often misled by

prejudices which fall away, while your instructions take place in every mind capable of distinguishing truth from falsehood. Upon the whole, permit me to say, I never saw a treatise which gave me so much pleasure and information. You show yourself qualified by nature for the charge of first minister: how far that would recommend you to a minister I think problematic. I am beginning to read over your works a second time; my approbation increases as I go on; the solidity of your reflections would overbalance a defect in style, if there was any, but I sincerely find none. The nervous manner in which you write is infinitely preferable to the florid phrases, which are always improper in a book of this nature, which is not designed to move the passions but to convince the reason.

I ought to say a great deal for the honour you have done me in your dedication. Lord Burleigh, or even Julius Cæsar, would have been proud of it; I can have no pretence to deserve it, yet I may truly say, nobody can be more sensible of the value of your present. It is pity the world should be deprived of the advantage of so useful a performance; yet perhaps it may be necessary to wait some time before you publish certain truths that are not yet popularly received.

I hope our dear Lady Fanny is in good health, and your young gentleman daily improving both by nature and instruction. I flatter myself that your affairs will soon take a more agreeable turn. Wherever you are I wish you every happiness; and wherever I am, you will ever have a faithful humble servant, engaged both by inclination and obligation to be always at your command. M. W. MONTAGU.

Venice, March 1, 1760.

N. B. This letter indorsed thus by Sir James Steuart himself;—"On receiving a MS. neatly bound and gilt, of the two first books of my Pol. Economy, with a dedication to her ladyship."

A MONSIEUR MONSIEUR LE CHEVALIER STEUART,

à Tubingen, en Suabe. Par Augsbourg.

I HAVE now with great pleasure, and I flatter myself with some improvement, read over again your delightful and instructive treatise: you have opened to me several truths of which I had before only a confused idea. I confess I cannot help being a little vain of comprehending a system that is calculated only for a thinking mind, and cannot be tasted without a willingness to lay aside many prejudices which arise from education and the conversation of people no wiser than our-

selves. I do not only mean my own sex when I speak of our confined way of reasoning; there are many of yours as incapable of judging otherwise than they have been early taught, as the most ignorant milk-maid: nay, I believe a girl out of a village or a nursery, more capable of receiving instruction than a lad just set free from the university. It is not difficult to write on blank paper, but 'tis a tedious if not an impossible task to scrape out nonsense already written, and put better sense in the place of it. Mr. Stuart is very happy to be under the direction of a father who will not suffer him to entertain errors at an age when 'tis hard to distinguish them. I often look back on my past life in the light in which old Montaigne considered it; it is, perhaps, a more useful study than it is generally imagined. Mr. Locke, who has made the best dissection of the human mind of any author I have ever read, declares that he has drawn all his observations from reflecting on the progression of his own ideas. It is true a very small proportion of knowledge is allowed us in this world, few truths permitted, but those truths are plain; they may be overseen or artfully obscured from our sight, but when pointed out to us, it is impossible to resist the conviction that accompanies them. I am persuaded your manuscript would have the same effect on every candid reader it has on me: but I am afraid their number is very small.

I think the omission you desire in the act of indemnity cannot fail of happening; I shall take every opportunity of putting people of my acquaintance in mind of it: at present, the real director (1) (at least of home affairs) is a countryman of yours; but you know there are certain circumstances that may disincline from meddling in some nice matters. I am always with gratitude and the truest esteem, both to Lady Frances and yourself, a faithful humble servant, M. W. MONTAGU.

Venice, April 7th, 1760.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

SIR,—I will not trouble you with a long letter; this is only to let you know that as soon as my daughter informed me of the

(1) Lord Mansfield is probably here alluded to. He was a member of the cabinet during the last years of George the Second's aeign, and supposed to have great influence with the Duke of Newcastle, the nominal head of that administration. The circumstance of his having been himself attached on the score of early Jacobitism, might make him cautious of appearing to protect persons in Sir J. Steuart's situation.

late great event, I immediately put her in mind of your affairs in the warmest manner. I do not doubt it will have the effect I wish. Your interest is one of the most considerable to myself, being with the strongest ties of esteem and gratitude, sir,

Your most obliged and faithful humble servant

Venice, Nov. 20, 1760. M. W. MONTAGU.

I hope Lady Fanny and your young gentleman are in perfect health.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

Venice, Jan. 13th, 1761.

I HAVE indulged myself some time with day-dreams of the happiness I hoped to enjoy this summer in the conversation of Lady Fanny and Sir James S.; but I hear such frightful stories of precipices and hovels during the whole journey, I begin to fear there is no such pleasure allotted me in the book of Fate: the Alps were once mole-hills in my sight when they interposed between me and the slightest inclination; now age begins to freeze, and brings with it the usual train of melancholy apprehensions. Poor human-kind! We always march blindly on; the fire of youth represents to us all our wishes possible; and, that over, we fall into despondency that prevents even easy enterprises: a store in winter, a garden in summer bounds all our desires, or at least our undertakings. If Mr. Steuart would disclose all his imaginations, I dare swear he has some thoughts of emulating Alexander or Demosthenes, perhaps both: nothing seems difficult at his time of life, every thing at mine. I am very unwilling, but am afraid I must submit to the confinement of my boat and my easy chair, and go no farther than they can carry me. Why are our views so extensive and our power so miserably limited? This is among the mysteries which (as you justly say) will remain ever unfolded to our shallow capacities. I am much inclined to think we are no more free agents than the queen of clubs when she victoriously takes prisoner the knave of hearts, and all our efforts (when we rebel against destiny) as weak as a card that sticks to a glove when the gamester is determined to throw it on the table. Let us then (which is the only true philosophy) be contented with our chance, and make the best of that very bad bargain of being born in this vile planet; where we may find however (God be thanked) much to laugh at, though little to approve.

I confess I delight extremely in looking on men in that light. How many thousands trample under foot, honour, ease and

pleasure, in pursuit of ribands of certain colours, dabs of embroidery on their clothes, and gilt wood carved behind their coaches in a particular figure? Others breaking their hearts till they are distinguished by the shape and colour of their hats; and, in general, all people earnestly seeking what they do not want, while they neglect the real blessings in their possession, I mean the innocent gratification of their senses, which is all we can properly call our own. For my part, I will endeavour to comfort myself for the cruel disappointment I find in renouncing Tubingen, by eating some fresh oysters on the table. I hope you are sitting down with dear Lady F. to some admirable red partridges, which I think are the growth of that country. Adieu! Live happy, and be not unmindful of your sincere distant friend, who will remember you in the tenderest manner while there is any such faculty as memory in the machine called

M. W. MONTAGU.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

From Venice, 25th of January, 1761.

SIR,—I have not returned my thanks for your obliging letter so soon as both duty and inclination prompted me; but I have had so severe a cold, accompanied with a weakness in my eyes, that I have been confined to my store for many days. This is the first use I make of my pen, I will not engage in a dispute with you, being very sure that I am unable to support it against you; yet I own I am not entirely of your opinion in relation to the civil list. I know it has long been a custom to begin every reign with some mark of the people's love exceeding what was shown to the predecessor: I am glad to see this distinguished by the trust and affection of the King to his people, and am persuaded it will have a very good effect on all our affairs foreign and domestic. It is possible my daughter may have some partiality; the character of his present Majesty needs only be half so perfect as she describes it, to be such a monarch as has never existed but in romances. Though I am preparing for my last and longest journey, and stand on the threshold of this dirty world, my several infirmities like post-horses ready to hurry me away, I cannot be insensible to the happiness of my native country, and am glad to see the prospect of a prosperity and harmony that I never was witness to. I hope my friends will be included in the public joy; and I shall always think Lady Fanny and Sir James Steuart in the first rank of those I wish to serve. Your conversation is a pleasure I would prefer to any other, but I confess even that cannot make

me desire to be in London, especially at this time when the shadow of credit that I should be supposed to possess, would attract daily solicitations, and gain me a number of enemies who would never forgive me the not performing impossibilities. If all people thought of power as I do, it would be avoided with as much eagerness as it is now sought. I never knew any person that had it who did not lament the load; though I confess (so infirm is human nature) they have all endeavoured to retain it, at the same time they complained of it.

You are above any view of this kind. I hope every post to hear news of your return to your native country, where that you may long enjoy a happiness superior to any a court can give, is the most ardent desire of, sir,

Your grateful and faithful humble servant,

M. W. MONTAGU.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

Venice, April 12th, 1761.

SIR,—I received your obliging letter yesterday, and make haste to answer in the first post. I am very sincere in assuring you all your interests are mine, consequently I share with you the concern you feel for Lady Fanny's disorders. You observe justly there is no happiness without an alloy, nor indeed any misfortune without some mixture of consolation, if our passions permitted us to perceive it; but alas! we are too imperfect to see on all sides; our wisest reflections (if the word wise may be given to humanity) are tainted by our hopes and fears; we all indulge views almost as extravagant as those of Phaeton, and are angry when we do not succeed in projects that are above the reach of mortality. The happiness of domestic life seems the most laudable as it is certainly the most delightful of our prospects, yet even that is denied, or at least so mixed, "we think it not sincere, or fear it cannot last." A long series of disappointments have perhaps worn out my natural spirits, and given a melancholy cast to my way of thinking. I would not communicate this weakness to any but yourself, who can have compassion even where your superior understanding condemns. I confess that tho' I am (it may be) beyond the strict bounds of reason pleased with my Lord Bute's and my daughter's prosperity, I am doubtful whether I will attempt to be a spectator of it. I have so many years indulged my natural inclinations to solitude and reading, I am unwilling to return to crowds and bustle, which would be unavoidable in London. The few friends I esteemed are now no more: the new set of people

who fill the stage at present are too indifferent to me even to raise my curiosity. I now begin to feel (very late, you'll say) the worst effect of age, blindness excepted; I am grown timorous and suspicious; I fear the inconstancy of that goddess so publickly adored in ancient Rome, and so heartily inwardly worship'd in the modern. I retain however such a degree of that uncommon thing called common sense, not to trouble the felicity of my children with my foreboding dreams, which I hope will prove as idle as the croaking of ravens or the noise of that harmless animal distinguished by the odious name of screech-owl. You will say why then do I trouble you with my old wives' prophecies? Need I tell you that it is one of the privileges of friendship to talk of our own follies and infirmities? you must then, nay you ought to pardon my tiresome tattle in consideration of the real attachment with which I am unalterably, sir, Your obliged and faithful humble servant,

M. W. MONTAGU.

My best compliments to dear Lady Fanny, and congratulation to the young gentleman. I do not doubt he is sorry to leave her; but if it be necessary for his advancement, you will teach him to suffer it, at least with patience.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

July 22nd, 1761.

SIR,—I expect you should wish me joy on the good fortune of a friend I esteem in the highest manner. I have always preferred the interest of those I love to my own. You need not doubt of my sincere affection towards the lady and young gentleman you mention. My own affairs here grow worse and and worse; my indiscreet well-wishers do me as much harm, more harm than any declared enemy could do. The notable plan of our great politician is to make me surrender my little castle; I, with the true spirit of old Whiggism, resolve to keep my ground, tho' I starve in the maintaining it or am eat up by the wild beasts of the wood, meaning gnats and flies. A word to the wise; you understand me. You may have heard of a facetious gentleman vulgarly called Tom Earle, i. e. Giles Earle,(1) Esq. His toast was always—

(1) A Lord of the Treasury. See Honourable Horace Walpole's letters to Sir Horace Mann, Dec. 16, 1741, for an account of a debate and a division upon the occasion of the election of the Chairman of the Committees of the House of Commons, in which some account of this gentleman is to be found.

"God bless you whatever becomes of me!"

The day when hungry friar wishes
He might eat other food than fishes,
Or, to explain the date more fully,
The twenty-second instant July.

TO SIR JAMES AND LADY FRANCES STEUART.

Indorsed "Oct. 1st, 1761, Augsbourg, on her way from Venice to England; received 3rd of Nov.")

MADAM AND SIR,— I am now part of my way to England, where I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you: it is so long since I have heard from you, I cannot guess where you are. I venture this to Tubingen, tho' I fancy two letters I have directed thither have miscarried, and am so uncertain of the fate of this I know not what to say. I think I cannot err in repeating a sincere truth, that I am, and ever shall be, faithfully your most humble servant, M. WORTLEY MONTAGU.

Since I wrote the above I am told I may go by Wirtemberg to Frankfort. I will then take that road in hopes of seeing yon.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

Rotterdam, Nov. 20th, 1761.

SIR,— I received yesterday your obliging and welcome letter by the hands of Mr. Simpson. I tried in vain to find you at Amsterdam: I began to think we resembled two parallel lines, destined to be always near and never to meet. You know there is no fighting (at least no overcoming) destiny. So far I am a confirmed Calvinist, according to the notions of the country where I now exist. I am dragging my ragged remnant of life to England. The wind and tide are against me; how far I have strength to struggle against both I know not; that I am arrived here is as much a miracle as any in the golden legend; and if I had foreseen half the difficulties I have met with, I should not certainly have had courage enough to undertake it. I have scrambled through more dangers than his M. (1) of P. or even my well-beloved cousin (not counsellor) Marquis Granby;(2)

(1) Majesty of Prussia,

(2) Lord Granby married the daughter of Charles sixth Duke of Somerset, by his wife the youngest daughter of Daniel Earl of Winchelsea and Nottingham, whose wife was the daughter of Basil Earl Fielding, and Lady Mary's first cousin.

but my spirits fail me when I think of my friends risqueing either health or happiness. I will write to Lady Fanny to hinder your coming to Rotterdam, and will sooner make one jump more myself to wait on you at Antwerp. I am glad poor D. has sold his medals. I confess I thought his buying them a very bold stroke. I supposed that he had already left London, but am told that he has been prevented by the machinations of that excellent politician and truly great man M——and his ministry.

My dear Lady Fanny, I am persuaded that you are more nearly concerned for the health of Sir James than he is himself. I address myself to you, to insist on it to him, not to undertake a winter progress in the begining of a fit of the gout.

I am nailed down here by a severe illness of my poor Marianne, who has not been able to endure the frights and fatigues that we have passed. If I live to see G. Britain, you will have there a sincere and faithful servant that will omit no occasion of serving you; and I think it almost impossible I should not succeed. You must be loved and esteemed wherever you are known. Give me leave, however, dear madam, to combat some of your notions, or more properly speaking, your passions. Mr. Steuart is in a situation that opens the fairest prospect of honour and advancement. We mothers are all apt to regret the absence of children we love: Solomon advises the sluggard to go to the ant and be wise; we should take the example of the innocent inhabitants of the air, when their young are fledged, they are delighted to see them fly and peck for themselves. Forgive this freedom. I have no other receipt for maternal fondness, a distemper which has long afflicted

Your ladyship's obliged and obedient humble servant,

M. W. MONTAGU.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

I RECEIVED last post your agreeable and obliging letter. I am now on the point of setting out for London; very dubious (with my precarious state of health) whether I shall arrive there: If I do, you will certainly hear from me again; if not, accept ('tis all I can offer) my sincerest wishes for the prosperity of yourself and family. I do not at all despair of your affairs going according to your desire, tho' I am not ordained the happiness to see it. My warmest compliments to Lady F., and believe me ever, sir,

Your faithful friend and humble servant,

Rotterdam, Dec. 12, 1761. M. W. MONTAGU.

Behold! a hard impenetrable frost has stopped my voyage, and I remain in the disagreeable state of uncertainty. I will not trouble you with my fruitless complaints; I am sure you have compassion for my present situation.

TO LADY FRANCES STEUART.

Rotterdam, Dec. 1761.

My dear Madam,—A great snow, weak sight, trouble of mind, and a feeble body, are more than sufficient excuses for a short letter; yet I would not omit a few lines to give you thanks for yours, and repeat to you my real desire to serve you in the most zealous manner. Any relation of Sir James will find a hearty welcome from me when I am in London. I now depend on wind and weather; you know how disagreeable that is. I will not afflict your good heart with my uneasinesses. I hope (and am determined to hope) the best, tho' in contradiction to appearances. In all humours I am,

Your ladyship's faithful humble servant, M. W. Montagu.

P.S. My dear Lady Fanny, we are both low-spirited; let us talk no more of melancholy matters. I should be glad to know the adventure of Sir James with the Countess B., and am sometimes tempted to seek her out, in hopes to edify by her discourse and example.

TO SIR JAMES STEUART.

Rotterdam, Dec. 26th, 1761.

Sir,—The thaw is now so far advanced I am in great hopes of moving in a few days. My first care at London will be your affairs: I think it almost impossible I should not succeed. You may assure Lady Fanny no endeavour shall be wanting on my side: if I find any material objection I shall not fail to let you know it; I confess I do not foresee any. A young gentleman arrived here last night, who is perhaps of your acquaintance, Mr. Hamilton; he is hastening to London in expectation of an act of grace, which I believe will be granted. I flatter myself with the view of seeing you in England, and can affirm with truth it is one of the greatest pleasures I expect there. Whatever prosperity my family now enjoys, it will add much to my happiness to see my friends easy; and while you are unfortunate I shall always think myself so. This very dull weather operates on my spirits, tho' I use my utmost efforts to support them: I beg dear Lady Fanny to do the same; a melancholy state of mind should never be indulged, since it often

remains even when the cause of it is removed. I have here neither amusement nor conversation, and am so infected by the climate, that I verily believe, was I to stay long, I should take to smoking and drinking, like the natives. I should wish you the compliments of the season, a merry Christmas, but I know not how to do it while you remain in so disagreeable an uncertainty; yet if you have the company of Mr. Steuart, his bloom of life will insensibly communicate part of his gaiety. If I could have foreseen my stay in this part of the world, I would have made a trip to Antwerp to enjoy a conversation ever honoured and remembered by, sir and madam,

Your most faithful and obedient humble servant,

M. W. MONTAGU.

TO LADY FRANCES STEUART.

Rotterdam, Jan. 2nd, 1762.

I HAVE been half way to Helvoet, and was obliged to turn back by the mountains of sea that obstructed our passage: the captain however gives me hopes of setting out in two or three days. I have had so many disappointments I can scarce entertain the flattering thought of arriving at London. Wherever I am, you may depend upon it, dear madam, I shall ever retain the warmest sentiments of goodwill for you and your family, and will use my utmost endeavours to give you better proofs of it than I can do by expressions, which will always fall short of my thoughts.

Many happy new years to you, madam. May this atone for the ill fortune of those that are past, and all those to come be cheerful. Mr. Hamilton, whom I mentioned, has, I believe, got a particular pardon; his case is extraordinary, having no relation to public affairs. I am sorry for poor Duff, and fear that wherever he moves there will be little difference in his situation; he carries with him such a load of indiscretion, it is hardly in the power of Fortune to serve him. We are crowded with officers of all ranks returning to England. The peace seems to be more distant than ever: it would be very indifferent to me if it did not affect my friends; my remaining time in this world is so short, I have few wishes to make for myself, and when I am free from pain ought to think myself happy.

It is uncommon at my age to have no distemper and to retain all my senses in their first degree of perfection. I should be unworthy these blessings if I did not acknowledge them. If I am so fortunate to see your ladyship and Sir James in good

health at London, it will be a great addition to the satisfaction of, dear madam,

Your faithful and obedient humble servant,

M. W. MONTAGU.

TO LADY FRANCES STEUART.

Great George Street, Hanover Square, March 5th, 1762.

DEAR MADAM,—I have written several letters to your ladyship, but I perceive by that I had the honour to receive yesterday they have all miscarried. I can assign no reason for it, but the uncertainty of the post. I am told many mails have been taken, and the letters either thrown away or suppressed. We must suffer this, amongst the common calamities of war. Our correspondence is so innocent we have no reason to apprehend our secrets being discovered.

I am proud to make public profession of being, dear madam, ever

Your most faithful humble servant, M. W. MONTAGU.

In writing to you, I think I write to your whole family; I hope they think so too.

TO LADY FRANCES STEUART.

BELIEVE me, dear madam, I see my daughter often, and never see her without mentioning (in the warmest manner) your affairs. I hope that when the proper season arrives (it cannot now be far off), all things will be adjusted to your satisfaction. It is the greatest pleasure I expect in the wretched remnant of life remaining to, dear madam,

Your faithful humble servant, M. W. MONTAGU

My sincere best wishes to all your ladyship's family.

George Street, Hanover Square, April 23, 1762.

TO LADY FRANCES STEUART.

(Indorsed "Lady Mary's last letter from London.")

DEAR MADAM,—I have been ill a long time, and am now so bad I am little capable of writing, but I would not pass in your opinion as either stupid or ungrateful. My heart is always warm in your service, and I am always told your affairs shall be taken care of. You may depend, dear madam, nothing shall be wanting on the part of,

Your ladyship's faithful humble servant,

July 2nd, 1762. M. W. MONTAGU.

ESSAYS.

A LETTER FROM THE OTHER WORLD, TO A LADY, FROM HER FORMER HUSBAND.

THIS letter will surprise you less than it would any other of your sex; and therefore I think I need no apology in breaking through a rule of good-breeding, which has been observed so strictly by all husbands for so many ages; who, however troublesome while they lived, have never frightened their wives by the least notice of them after their deaths: but your reverend doctor will inform you, that there is nothing supernatural in this correspondence; and that the existence of immortal spirits includes a tender concern for the poor militant mortals of your world. I own I was a little puzzled how to convey this epistle, and thought it best to assume a material form some few moments, and put it myself into the penny-post. In my hurry (being very impatient to let you hear from me) I unluckily forgot my little finger, which produced an odd accident; for the wench at the post-office would have taken me up for one of the incendiaries. Already had the mob assembled round the door, and nothing but dissolving into air could have saved me from Newgate. Several ran down the alleys in pursuit of me; and particular care was taken of my letter, in hopes of reading it in the newspaper. You may imagine I would not have exposed myself to this adventure, but out of the sincerest regard to the happiness of the dear partner of my worldly cares. Without the least uneasiness I have seen you dispose of yourself into the arms of another; and I would never disturb you while you were seeking pleasure in forgetting me; but I cannot bear that you should constrain yourself out of respect to me. I see every motion of your mind now much clearer than I did in my life (though then I guessed pretty shrewdly sometimes). I know the real content that you find in coloured riband, and am sensible how much you sacrifice to imaginary decency every time you put on that odious rusty black, which is half worn out. Alas! my dear Eliza, in these seats of perfect love and beauty, the veriest scrub of a cherubim (some of which have raked cinders behind Montagu House, as they often tell me) is more charming than

you were on your first wedding-day. Judge, then, whether I can have any satisfaction in looking at your crape hood, when I am in this bright company. You know, that in my terrestrial state, three bottles would sometimes raise me to that pitch of philosophy, I utterly forgot you, when you were but some few inches from me. Do not fancy me grown so impertinent here, as to observe so nicely whether you obey the forms of widowhood; and do not think to cajole me with such instances of your affection, when you are giving the most substantial proofs of it to another man. I have already assured you I am exalted above jealousy, if I could have been sensible of it. You have provoked me by a second choice, so absolutely opposite to your first. He is often talking of certain fellows he calls Classic Authors, who I never troubled my head with: and I know this letter will meet with more regard from him than from you; for he is better skilled in the language of the dead than the living.

IN A PAPER, CALLED THE NONSENSE OF COMMON SENSE.—PUBLISHED JANUARY 24, 1738.

I HAVE always, as I have already declared, professed myself a friend, though I do not aspire to the character of admirer of the fair sex; and as such I am warmed with indignation at the barbarous treatment they have received from the *Common Sense* of *January* 14, and the false advice that he gives them. He either knows them very little, or, like an interested quack, prescribes such medicines as are likely to hurt their constitutions. It is very plain to me, from the extreme partiality with which he speaks of *Operas*, and the rage with which he attacks both *Tragedy* and *Comedy*, that the author is a *Performer* in the *Opera*: and whoever reads his paper with attention, will be of my opinion; else no *thing* alive would assert, at the same time, the innocence of an entertainment, contrived wholly to soften the mind and soothe the sense, without any pretence to a moral; and so vehemently declaim against plays, whose end is, to show the fatal consequences of vice, to warn the innocent against the snares of a wellbred designing *Dorimant*. You see there to what insults a woman of wit, beauty, and quality, is exposed, that has been seduced by the artificial tenderness of a vain agreeable gallant; and I believe, that very comedy has given more checks to ladies in pursuit of present pleasures, so closely attended with shame and sorrow, than all the sermons they have ever heard in their lives. But

this author does not seem to think it possible to stop their propensity to galantry, by reason or reflection. He only desires them to fill up their time with all sorts of trifles: in short, he recommends to them gossipping, scandal, lying, and a whole troop of follies, instead of it, as the only preservatives for their virtue.

I am for treating them with more dignity; and, as I profess myself a protector of all the oppressed, I shall look upon them as my peculiar care. I expect to be told, this is downright *Quixotism*, and that I am venturing to engage the strongest part of mankind, with a paper helmet upon my head. I confess it is an undertaking where I cannot foresee any considerable success; and, according to an author I have read somewhere.

The world will still be ruled by knaves
And fools, contending to be slaves.

But, however, I keep up the character of a moralist, and shall use my endeavours to relieve the distressed, and defeat vulgar prejudices, whatever the event may be. Among the most universal errors, I reckon that of treating the weaker sex with a contempt which has a very bad influence on their conduct. How many of them think it excuse enough to say they are women, to indulge any folly that comes into their heads! This renders them useless members of the commonwealth, and only burdensome to their own families, where the wise husband thinks he lessens the opinion of his own understanding, if he at any time condescends to consult his wife's. Thus, what reason nature has given them is thrown away, and a blind obedience expected from them by all their ill-natured masters; and, on the other side, as blind a complaisance shown those that are indulgent, who say often, that women's weakness must be complied with, and it is a vain troublesome attempt to make them hear reason.

I attribute a great part of this way of thinking, which is hardly ever controverted, either to the ignorance of authors, who are many of them heavy *collegians*, that have never been admitted to politer conversations than those of their *bed-makers*, or to the design of selling their works, which is generally the only view of writing, without any regard to truth, or the ill-consequences that attend the propagation of wrong notions. A paper smartly wrote, though perhaps only some old conceits dressed in new words, either in rhyme or prose:—I say *rhyme*, for I have seen no *verses* wrote for many years:—such a paper, either to ridicule or declaim against the ladies, is very welcome to the

coffee-houses, were there is hardly one man in ten but fancies he has some reason or other to curse some of the sex most heartily. Perhaps his sisters' fortunes are to run away with the money that would be better bestowed at the Groom-porter's; or an old mother, good for nothing, keeps a jointure from a hopeful son, that wants to make a settlement on his mistress; or a handsome young fellow is plagued with a wife, that will remain alive, to hinder his running away with a great fortune, having two or three of them in love with him. These are serious misfortunes, that are sufficient to exasperate the mildest tempers to a contempt of the sex: not to speak of lesser inconveniences, which are very provoking at the time they are felt.

How many pretty gentlemen have been unmercifully jilted by pert hussies, after having curtsied to them at *half a dozen Operas;* nay, permitted themselves to be led out *twice*: yet, after these encouragements, which amount very near to an engagement, have refused their *billets doux,* and perhaps married other men, under their noses. How welcome is a couplet or two, in scorn of womankind, to such a disappointed lover; and with what comfort he reads, in many profound authors, that they are never to be pleased but by *coxcombs;* and, consequently, he owes his ill success to the brightness of his understanding, which is beyond female comprehension. The country 'squire is confirmed, in the elegant choice he has made, in preferring the conversation of his hounds to that of his wife; and the kind keepers, a numerous sect, find themselves justified in throwing away their time and estates on a parcel of jilts, when they read, that neither birth nor education can make any of the sex rational creatures; and they can have no value, but what is to be seen in their faces.

Hence springs the applause with which such libels are read; but I would ask the applauders, if these notions, in their own nature, are likely to produce any good effect towards reforming the *vicious*, instructing the weak, or guiding the young? I would not every day tell my footmen, if I kept any, that their whole fraternity were a pack of scoundrels; that lying and stealing were inseparable qualities from their cloth, that I should think myself very happy in them, if they confined themselves to innocent lies, and would only steal candles' ends. On the contrary, I would say in their presence, that birth and money were accidents of fortune, that no man was to be seriously despised for wanting them; that an honest faithful servant was a character of more value than an insolent corrupt lord; that the real distinction between man and man lay in his integrity, which, in one shape or other, generally met with its reward in the

world, and could not fail of giving the highest pleasure, by a consciousness of virtue, which every man feels that is so happy to possess it.

With this gentleness would I treat my inferiors, with much greater esteem would I speak to that beautiful half of mankind who are distinguished by *petticoats*. If I were a divine, I would remember, that in their first creation they were designed as a help for the other sex; and nothing was ever made incapable of the end of its creation. 'Tis true, the first lady had so little experience, that she hearkened to the persuasion of an impertinent dangler; and, if you mind, he succeeded, by persuading her that she was not so wise as she should be.

Men that have not sense enough to show any superiority in their arguments, hope to be yielded to by a faith, that, as they are men, all the reason that has been allotted to human kind has fallen to their share. I am seriously of another opinion. As much greatness of mind may be shown in submission as in command, and some women have suffered a life of hardships with as much philosophy as *Cato* traversed the deserts of *Africa*, and without that support the view of glory offered him, which is enough for the human mind that is touched with it, to go through any toil or danger. But this is not the situation of a woman whose virtue must only shine to her own recollection, and loses that name when it is ostentatiously exposed to the world. A lady who has performed her duty as a daughter, a wife, and a mother, raises in me as much veneration as *Socrates* or *Xenophon;* and much more than I would pay either to *Julius Cæsar* or *Cardinal Mazarine*, though the first was the most famous enslaver of his country and the last the most successful plunderer of his master.

A woman really virtuous, in the utmost extent of this expression, has virtue of a purer kind than any philosopher has ever shown; since she knows, if she has sense, and without it there can be no virtue, that mankind is too much prejudiced against her sex, to give her any degree of that fame which is so sharp a spur to their great actions. I have some thoughts of exhibiting a set of pictures of such meritorious ladies, where I shall say nothing of the fire of their eyes, or the pureness of their complexions, but give them such praises as befit a rational sensible being: virtues of choice, and not beauties of accident. I beg they would not so far mistake me as to think I am undervaluing their charms: a beautiful mind, in a beautiful body, is one of the finest objects shown us by nature. I would not have them place so much value on a quality that can be only useful to one, as to neglect that which

may be of benefit to thousands, by precept or by example. There will be no occasion of amusing them with trifles, when they consider themselves capable of not only making the most amiable, but the most estimable, figures in life. Begin, then, ladies, by paying those authors with scorn and contempt, who, with a sneer of affected admiration, would throw you below the dignity of the human species.

CARABOSSE.

A L'ABBÉ CONTI.

Il y avoit autrefois un Prince et une Princesse (car c'est ainsi que ma nourrice commençoit tous les contes dont elle me berçoit). Le Prince estoit brave et généreux, la Princesse belle et sage : leurs vertus, et leur amour réciproque et constant, faisoient tout à la fois la gloire et la honte du siècle. Mais comme il n'y a point de félicité parfaite, il leur manquoit des enfans : les temples de tous les dieux estoient chargés de leurs offrandes, et toutes les bonnes fées des environs de leurs présents, pour obtenir la seule chose qu'ils avoient à souhaiter. Il est vrai qu'on ne put jamais persuader à la Princesse de rechercher les mauvaises, et c'estoit en vain que le Prince lui représentoit que les méehantes pouvoient nuire avec autant de facilité que les bienfaisantes pouvoient servir ; elle disoit toujours que faire la cour aux vicieux estoit une espèce de culte rendu au vice, et elle ne pouvoit pas s'y résoudre. On dit mesme qu'elle s'émancipoit quelquefois à blasmer leur conduite d'une façon un peu téméraire. Enfin ses vœux furent comblés, elle devint grosse. Elle n'oublia pas de prier à ses couches toutes les fées de ses amies, et elle leur préparoit des présents dignes de leur estre offerts. Donner des pierreries ou de l'or aux maistresses des mines auroit été leur faire un affront : elle sçavoit qu'elles en font si peu de cas, qu'elles en comblent souvent les mortels les plus indignes pour en mieux marquer leur mépris. Elle avoit ramassé, par des soins infinis, de beaux vers passionnés composés par des amants sincères, le portrait d'une belle religieuse qui n'avoit jamais pensé à l'amour profane, une phiole (très petite à la vérité) des larmes versées par une jeune et riche veuve seule dans son cabinet, et des livres de théologie qui n'avoient jamais ennuyé personne. Les fées estoient toutes étonnées d'où elle auroit pu trouver tant de choses rares et précieuses ; elles étoient empressées de témoigner leur reconnoissance en rendant son enfant la personne du monde la plus accomplie et la plus heureuse. Elle mit au

monde une petite princesse: à peine avoit-elle vu la lumière que la fée Bellinde s'écria, Je la doue d'une beauté noble et touchante. Elle n'avoit pas cessé de parler quand on entendit un bruit comme de cent canons déchargés à la fois, un sifffement comme de mille serpents furieux, et on vit descendre par la cheminée la fée Carabosse, montée à califourchons sur un énorme crapaud. Je ne veux pas salir mon papier par la description de sa figure, faite pour inspirer le dégoust et l'horreur. Je veux (crioit-elle d'une voix rauque) que cette fille chérie perde cette beauté admirable par la petite-vérole dans l'asge qu'elle commence à sentir ses avantages. La fée Spirituelle se flattant d'adoucir ce malheur, disoit: Je la doue d'une mémoire la plus heureuse qui ait jamais été, d'un goust juste, d'une vivacité surprenante, tempérée par un jugement qui réglera toutes ses paroles: elle excellera dans tous les genres d'écrire; elle sera sçavante sans vanité, et vive sans étourderie. Ce bel esprit (répliqua Carabosse avec un souris dédaigneux) ne servira qu'à lui attirer des ennemis; elle seroit toujours en proye aux sots, déchirée par leurs malices, et importunée par leurs assiduités. Je veux, disoit la brillante Argentine en s'avançant, que son père soit le plus riche seigneur de son rang, et que son mari ait des millions d'or. Oui, interrompit Carabosse, elle vivra au milieu des trésors sans en avoir jamais à sa disposition. Je lui donne, disait Hygeia, une santé à toute épreuve, que ni les chagrins ni les fatigues ne pourront diminuer. Cette santé, répondit Carabosse, lui inspirera la hardiesse de tenter des entreprises téméraires, et de risquer des dangers dont elle seroit toujours environnée. Elle aura, disoit l'aimable Harmonie, l'oreille juste et un goust exquis pour la musique— Je lui oste (crioit Carabosse en lui coupant la parole) le pouvoir de chanter, pour qu'elle sente toute la rage du désir et de l'impuissance. Les bonnes fées, consternées de voir leurs bénédictions ainsi empoisonnées, se parloient tout bas, et consultoient en quelle manière on pouvoit vaincre cette malice infernale. Spirituelle crut avoir trouvé un expédient infaillible: Il faut lui oster (disoit-elle) tous les vices, et elle se trouvera garantie des malheurs qui en sont la suite. Je lui oste ajouta-t-elle d'un ton haut et ferme) toutes les semences de l'envie et de l'avarice, qui sont les sources des misères de l'humanité; elle aura l'humeur douce et égale,—et un grand fonds de tendresse, s'écria Carabosse avec un éclat de rire qui faisoit trembler le palais.—Les fées bienfaisantes s'envolèrent, ne voiant aucun remède à tant de maux. La Princesse mourut de chagrin; son enfant s'embellisoit chaque jour; mais **** Ici le manuscrit est défectueux.

SUR LA MAXIME DE M. DE ROCHFOUCAULT,

QU'IL Y A DES MARIAGES COMMODES, MAIS POINT DE DÉLICIEUX.

Il paroist bien hardi d'entreprendre de détruire une maxime établie par un bel esprit si célèbre que Mr. de Rochefoucault, et receue avec une joye si aveugle chez une nation qui se dit la seule parfaitement polie du monde, et qui a donné depuis si long-temps des loix de galanterie à toute l'Europe.

Cependant (pleine de l'ardeur qu'inspire la vérité), j'ose avancer tout le contraire, et je soutiens hardiment qu'il n'y a qu'un amour marié qui peut être délicieux pour une asme bien faite.

La nature nous a présenté des plaisirs propres pour notre espèce ; on n'a qu'à suivre son instinct raffiné par le goust, et relevé par une imagination vive et douce, pour trouver le seul bonheur dont les mortels sont capables. L'ambition, l'avarice, la vanité, ne peuvent donner (dans leurs plus grandes jouissances) que des plaisirs bas, médiocres, et qui ne sont pas capables de toucher un cœur noble.

On peut regarder les bienfaits de la fortune comme des échaffauts nécessaires pour monter au bonheur; mais on ne peut jamais le trouver, soit en y bornant ses souhaits, soit en obtenant ses frivoles faveurs, qui ne sont que les gesnes de la vie, quand on les regarde comme pas nécessaires pour obtenir ou conserver une félicité plus précieuse. Cette félicité ne se trouve que dans l'amitié fondée sur une estime parfaite fixée par la reconnoissance, soutenue par l'inclination, et éveillée par la tendresse de l'amour, que les anciens ont très bien dépeint sous la figure d'un bel enfant : il se plaist dans les jeux enfantins ; il est tendre et délicat, incapable de nuire, charmé des bagatelles; tous ses desseins se terminent en des plaisirs, mais ces plaisirs sont doux et innocents. On a représenté, sous une figure bien différente, une autre passion trop grosse pour nommer (mais dont la pluspart d'hommes sont seulement capables) : je veux dire celle d'un satyre, qui est plus bestial qu'humain, et on a exprimé dans cet animal équivoque le vice et la brutalité de cet appétit sensuel, qui est cependant le vrai fondement de tous les beaux procédés de la belle galanterie. Une passion qui tasche de s'assouvir dans la perte de ce qu'elle trouve de plus aimable au monde, qui est fondée sur l'injustice, soutenue par la tromperie, et suivie des crimes, du remords, de la honte et du mépris, peut-elle estre délicieuse pour un cœur vertueux? Voilà pourtant l'aimable équipage de tous les en-

gagements illégitimes : on se trouble obligé d'arracher de l'asme tous les sentiments de l'honneur, inséparable d'une éducation noble, et de vivre misérable dans la poursuite éternelle de ce qu'on condamne ; d'avoir tous ses plaisirs empoisonnés de remords, et d'être réduit à cet état malheureux de renoncer à la vertu sans pouvoir se plaire dans le vice.

On ne peut gouster les douceurs d'un amour parfait que dans un mariage bien assorti : rien ne marque tant de petitesse dans l'esprit que de s'arrester aux paroles. Qu'importe que la coustume (pour laquelle nous voions d'assez bonnes raisons) ait donné un peu de ridicule à ces paroles, de mari et de femme? Un mari signifie (dans l'interprétation générale) un jaloux, brutal, grondeur, tyran, ou bien un bon sot à qui on peut tout imposer : une femme est un démon domestique, qu'on donne pour tromper ou pour tourmenter ce pauvre homme. La conduite de la pluspart des gens justifie assez ces deux caractères; mais encore, qu'importent des paroles? Un mariage bien réglé ne ressemble pas à ces mariages d'intérest ou d'ambition; ce sont deux amants qui vivent ensemble : qu'un prestre dise de certaines paroles, qu'un notaire signe de certains papiers, je regarde ces préparatifs dans la même vue qu'un amant l'échelle de corde qu'il attache à la fenestre de sa maîtresse. Pourvu qu'on vive ensemble, qu'importe à quel prix et par quels moiens ?

Il est impossible qu'un amour parfait et bien fondé soit heureux que dans la paisible possession de l'objet aimé, et cette paix n'oste rien de la douceur ni de la vivacité d'une passion telle que je sais l'imaginer. Si je voulois m'occuper à faire des romans, je ne voudrois pas placer les images du vrai bonheur dans l'Arcadie, ni sur les bords du Lignon ; je ne suis pas assez précieuse pour borner la plus délicate tendresse à des souhaits. Je commencerois le roman par le mariage de deux personnes unies par l'esprit, par le goût et par l'inclination. Se peut-il donc rien de plus heureux que d'unir leurs intérests et leurs jours? L'Amant a le plaisir de donner la dernière marque d'estime et de confiance à sa maîtresse, et l'Amante lui donne en récompense le soin de son repos et de sa liberté. Peut-on se donner des gages plus chers ou plus tendres? et n'est-il pas naturel de souhaiter de donner des preuves incontestables d'une tendresse dont l'asme est pénétrée?

Je sais qu'il y a de faux délicats qui soutiennent que les plaisirs de l'amour ne sont dûs qu'aux difficultés et aux dangers. Ils disent fort spirituellement que la rose ne serait pas rose sans épines, et mille fadaises de cette nature, qui font si peu d'impression sur mon esprit, que je suis persuadée que si j'estois

Amant, la crainte de nuire à celle que j'aimerois me rendroit malheureux, si sa possession même était accompagnée de dangers pour elle.

La vie des Amants mariés est bien différente; ils ont le plaisir de la passer dans une suite d'obligations mutuelles et de marques de bienveillance, et on a la joye de voir qu'on fait le bonheur entier de l'objet aimé, en quel point je place la jouissance parfaite.

Les plus petits soins de l'œconomie deviennent nobles et délicats, quand ils sont relevés par des sentiments de tendresse. Meubler une chambre, n'est pas meubler une chambre—c'est orner un lieu où j'attends mon Amant; ordonner un souper, n'est pas simplement donner des ordres à mon cuisinier—c'est m'amuser à régaler celui que j'aime: ces occupations nécessaires, regardées dans cette vue par une personne amoureuse, sont des plaisirs mille fois plus vifs et plus touchants que les spectacles et le jeu, qui font le bonheur de cette foule incapable de la vraie volupté. Une passion heureuse et contente adoucit tous les mouvements de l'asme, et dore tous les objets qu'on voit. Un Amant heureux, (j'entends marié à sa maistresse) s'il exerce une charge, les fatigues d'un camp, l'embarras d'une cour, tout lui devient agréable, quand c'est pour servir celle qu'il aime. Si la fortune favorable (car cela ne dépend nullement du mérite) fait réussir ses desseins, tous les avantages qu'elle lui donne sont des offrandes qu'il met aux pieds de sa charmante amie; il la remercie de l'inspiration qu'il doit à ses charmes, et il trouve dans le succès de son ambition un plaisir plus vif et plus digne d'un honnête homme, que celui d'élever sa fortune et d'être applaudi du public. Il ne jouit de la gloire, du rang et de la richesse, que par rapport à celle qu'il aime; et c'est son amante qu'il entend louer, quand il s'attire l'approbation d'un parlement, l'applaudissement d'une armée, ou l'agrément de son prince. Dans le malheur, c'est sa consolation de se retirer auprès d'une personne attendrie par ses disgrasces, et de se dire entre ses bras: Mon bonheur ne dépend pas du caprice de la fortune; ici j'ai un azile asseuré contre les chagrins; vostre estime me rend insensible à l'injustice d'une cour, ou à l'ingratitude d'un maître, et j'ai une espèce de plaisir dans la perte de mon bien, puisque cette infortune me donne de nouvelles preuves de votre tendresse. A quoi servent les grandeurs à des personnes déjà heureuses? Nous n'avons besoin ni de flatteurs ni d'équipages; je règne dans vostre cœur, et je possède toutes les délices de la nature dans vostre personne.

Enfin, il n'y a point de situation dont la tristesse n'est pas

capable d'être diminuée par la compagnie de l'objet de son amour; une maladie mesme n'est pas sans douceurs, quand on a le plaisir d'estre soigné par celle qu'on aime. Je ne finirois jamais si j'entreprenois de donner un détail de tous les agréments d'une union où l'on trouve à la fois tout ce qui peut satisfaire une imagination tendre et délicate, et tout ce qui flatte les sens dans la volupté la plus pure et la plus étendue; mais je ne sçaurois finir sans parler du plaisir de voir croistre, tous les jours, les aimables marques d'une tendre amitié, et de s'occuper (selon leurs différents sexes) à les perfectionner. On s'abandonne à ce doux instinct de la nature, raffiné par l'amour. On baise dans une fille la beauté de sa mère, et on respecte dans un fils l'esprit et les apparences d'une probité naturelle qu'on estime dans son père. C'est un plaisir auquel Dieu mesme (à ce que dit Moïse) a été sensible, quand voiant ce qu'il avoit fait, il le trouvoit bon. A propos de Moïse, le premier plan du bonheur a infiniment surpassé tous les autres, et je ne sçaurois former d'idée d'un Paradis plus Paradis que l'état où estoient placés nos premiers parents. Cela n'a pas duré, parcequ'ils ne connoissoient pas le monde, et c'est par la mesme raison qu'on voit si peu de mariages d'inclination heureux. Eve estoit une sotte enfant, et Adam un homme fort peu éclairé: quand des gens de cette espèce se rencontrent, ils ont beau estre amoureux, cela ne peut pas durer. Ils se forment pendant la fureur de leur amour des idées surnaturelles; un homme croit sa maîtresse un ange parcequ'elle est belle, et une femme est enchantée du mérite de son amant parcequ'il l'adore. Le premier changement de son teint lui oste son adoration, et le mari cessant d'être adorateur, devient haïssable à celle qui n'a pas eu d'autre fondement de son amour. Ils se dégoustent peu à peu, et à l'exemple de nos premiers parents, ils ne manquent pas de rejetter l'un sur l'autre le crime de leur mutuelle foiblesse. Après la froideur, le mépris marche à grands pas, et ils sont prévenus qu'il faut se haïr puisqu'ils sont mariés. Leurs moindres défauts se grossissent à leur vue, et ils sont aveugles sur les agréments qui pourroient les toucher en toute autre personne. Un commerce établi sur l'usage des sens ne peut pas avoir d'autre suite. Un homme en épousant sa maistresse doit oublier qu'elle lui paroist adorable, pour considérer que c'est une simple mortelle sujette aux maladies, aux caprices et à la mauvaise humeur: il doit préparer sa constance à soutenir la perte de sa beauté, et amasser un fonds de complaisance qui est nécessaire pour la conversation continuelle de la personne du monde la plus raisonnable et la moins inégale. La dame, de son côté, ne doit pas attendre une suite

de flatteries et d'obéissance; elle se doit disposer elle-même à obéir agréablement—science très difficile, et par conséquence d'un grand mérite auprès d'un homme capable de le sentir. Elle doit tascher de relever les charmes d'une maistresse par le bon sens et la solidité d'une amie. Quand deux personnes préoccupées par des sentimens si raisonnables sont unies par des liens éternels, la nature entière leur rit, et les objets les plus communs leur deviennent charmants. Il me semble que c'est une vie infiniment plus douce, plus élégante et plus voluptueuse, que la galanterie la plus heureuse et la mieux conduite. Une femme capable de réflexion ne peut regarder un amant autrement qu'un séducteur, qui veut profiter de sa foiblesse pour se donner un plaisir d'un moment, aux dépens de sa gloire, de son repos, et peut-estre de sa vie. Un voleur qui met le pistolet à la gorge pour enlever une bourse me paroist plus honneste et moins coupable ; et j'ai assez bonne opinion de moi pour croire, que si j'étois homme, je serois aussi capable de former le plan d'un assassinat, que celui de corrompre un honneste femme, estimée dans le monde et heureuse dans son ménage. Serois-je capable d'empoisonner son cœur en lui inspirant une passion funeste, à laquelle il faut immoler l'honneur, la tranquillité et la vertu? Rendrois-je méprisable une personne parcequ'elle me paroist aimable? Dois-je récompenser sa tendresse en lui rendant sa maison en horreur, ses enfants indifférents, et son mari détesté? Je crois que ces réflexions me paroistroient dans la même force si mon sexe m'avoit rendu excusable dans de pareils procédés, et j'espère que j'aurois été assez sensée pour ne pas croire le vice moins vicieux parcequ'il est à la mode.

J'estime beaucoup les mœurs Turques (peuple ignorant, mais très poli à ma fantaisie). Un galant convaincu d'avoir débauché une femme mariée est regardé parmi eux avec la même horreur qu'une dame abandonnée chez nous. Il est seur de ne jamais faire fortune, et on auroit honte de donner une charge considérable à un homme soupçonné d'avoir fait une injustice si énorme. Que diroit-on dans cette nation morale si on voyoit quelques-uns de nos anti-chevaliers-errans, qui sont toujours en poursuite d'aventures pour mettre des filles innocentes en détresse, et pour perdre l'honneur des femmes de condition? qui ne regardent la beauté, la jeunesse, le rang, et la vertu même, que comme des aiguillons pour exciter le désir de les ruiner? et qui mettent toute la gloire à paroistre des séducteurs habiles, oubliant qu'avec tous leurs soins ils ne peuvent jamais atteindre qu'au second rang de ce bel escadron, les diables ayant été depuis si long-temps en possession du premier? J'avoue que nos manières barbares sont si bien

calculées pour l'établissement du vice et du malheur (qui en est inséparable), qu'il faut avoir des têtes et des cœurs infiniment au-dessus du commun, pour pouvoir jouir de la félicité d'un mariage tel que je viens de le dépeindre. La nature est si foible et si portée au changement, qu'il est difficile de soutenir la constance la mieux fondée parmi toutes les dissipations que nos coustumes ridicules ont rendues inévitables. Un mari amoureux a peine à voir prendre à sa femme toutes les libertés du bel usage: il paroist y avoir de la dureté à les refuser, et il se trouve réduit, pour se conformer aux manières polies de l'Europe, de voir tous les jours ses mains en proye à qui les veut prendre, de l'entendre partager à toute la terre les charmes de son esprit, la voir montrer sa gorge en plein midi, se parer pour des bals et des spectacles, s'attirer des adorateurs, et écouter les fades flatteries de mille et mille sots. Peut-on soutenir son estime pour une créature si publique? et ne perd-elle pas (au moins) beaucoup de son prix? Je reviens toujours à mes manières Orientales, où les plus belles femmes se contentent de limiter le pouvoir de leurs charmes à celui à qui il est permis d'en jouir : elles ont trop d'humanité pour souhaiter de faire des misérables, et elles sont trop sincères pour ne pas avouer qu'elles se croient capables d'exciter des passions.

Je me souviens d'une conversation que j'ai eue avec une dame de grande qualité à Constantinople, (la plus aimable femme que j'aie connue de ma vie, et pour qui j'ai eu ensuite une tendre amitié): elle m'avoua naïvement qu'elle estoit contente de son mari. Que vous êtes libertines (me disoit-elle), vous autres dames Chrétiennes! il vous est permis de recevoir les visites d'autant d'hommes que vous voulez, et vos lois vous permettent sans bornes l'usage de l'amour et du vin. Je l'asseurai qu'elle estoit fort mal instruite; qu'il estoit vrai que nous recevions des visites, mais ces visites estoient pleines de respect et de retenue, et que c'estoit un crime d'entendre parler d'amour, ou d'aimer un autre que son mari. Vos maris sont bien bons (me répliqua-t-elle en riant) de se contenter d'une fidélité si bornée: vos yeux, vos mains, votre conversation est pour le public, et que prétendez-vous réserver pour eux? Pardonnez-moi, ma belle Sultane, (ajouta-t-elle en m'embrassant) j'ai toute l'inclination possible de croire tout ce que vous me dites, mais vous voulez m'imposer des impossibilités. Je sçai les saletés des infidelles; je vois que vous en avez honte, et je ne vous en parlerai plus.

J'ai trouvé tant de bon sens et de vraisemblance en tout ce qu'elle me disoit, que j'avois peine à la contredire, et j'avouai d'abord qu'elle avoit raison de préférer les mœurs Musul-

manes à nos coustumes ridicules, qui sont une confusion surprenante des maximes sévères du Christianisme avec tout le libertinage des Lacédémoniennes : et nonobstant nos folles manières, je suis du sentiment qu'une femme déterminée à faire son bonheur de l'amour de son mari, doit abandonner le désir extravagant de se faire adorer du public; et qu'un mari qui aime tendrement sa femme, doit se priver de la réputation d'être galant à la cour. Vous voyez que je suppose deux personnes bien extraordinaires : il n'est donc pas fort surprenant qu'une telle union soit bien rare dans les païs où il est nécessaire de mépriser les coustumes les plus établies pour être heureux.

POEMS.

JULIA TO OVID.

Written at Twelve Years of Age, in imitation of Ovid's Epistles.

ARE love and power incapable to meet?
And must they all be wretched who are great?
Enslav'd by titles, and by forms confin'd,
For wretched victims to the state design'd.
What rural maid, that my sad fortune knows,
Would quit her cottage to embrace my woes?
Would be this cursed sacrifice to power,
This wretched daughter of Rome's emperour?
When sick with sighs to absent Ovid given,
I tire with vows the unrelenting Heaven,
Drown'd in my tears, and with my sorrows pale,
What then do all my kindred gods avail?
Let proud Augustus the whole world subdue,
Be mine to place all happiness in you;
With nobler pride I can on thrones look down,
Can court your love and can despise a crown.—
O Love! thou pleasure never dearly bought!
Whose joys exceed the very lover's thought!
Of that soft passion, when you teach the art,
In gentle sounds it steals into the heart;
With such sweet magic does the soul surprise,
'T is only taught us better by your eyes.
O Ovid! first of the inspired train,
To Heaven I speak in that enchanting strain,
So sweet a voice can never plead in vain.
Apollo will protect his favourite son,
And all the little Loves unto thy succour run.
The Loves and Muses in thy prayer shall join,
And all their wishes and their vows be thine;
Some god will soften my hard Father's breast,
And work a miracle to make thee blest.

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Hard as this is, I even this could bear,
But greater ills than what I feel, I fear.
My fame—my Ovid—both for ever fled,
What greater evil is there left to dread?

Yes, there is one ——————————
Avert it, Gods, who do my sorrows see!
Avert it, thou, who art a god to me!
When back to Rome your wishing eyes are cast,
And on the lessening towers you gaze your last—
When fancy shall recall unto your view
The pleasures now for ever lost to you,
The shining court, and all the thousand ways
To melt the night and pass the happy days—
Will you not sigh, and hate the wretched maid,
Whose fatal love your safety has betray'd?
Say that from me your banishment does come,
And curse the eyes that have expell'd you Rome?
Those eyes, which now are weeping for your woes,
The sleep of death shall then for ever close.

IRREGULAR VERSES TO TRUTH.

Written at Fourteen Years of Age.

WHERE, lovely Goddess, dost thou dwell?
In what remote and silent shade?
Within what cave or lonely cell?
With what old hermit, or unpractised maid?
In vain I 've sought thee all around,
But thy unfashionable sound
In crowds was never heard,
Nor ever has thy form in town or court appear'd.
The sanctuary is not safe to thee,
Chased thence by endless mystery;
Thy own professors chase thee thence,
And wage eternal war with thee and sense;
Then in perplexing comments lost,
E'en when they would be thought to show the most.
Most beautiful when most distress'd,
Descend, O Goddess, to my breast;
There thou may'st reign, unrivall'd and alone,
My thoughts thy subjects, and my heart thy throne.

SONG.

How happy is the harden'd heart,
Where interest is the only view!
Can sigh and meet, or smile and part,
Nor pleased, nor grieved, nor false, nor true—

Yet, have they truly peace of mind?
Or do they ever truly know
The bliss sincerer tempers find,
Which truth and virtue can bestow?

THE LADY'S RESOLVE.

Written on a Window, soon after her Marriage, 1713.

WHILST thirst of praise and vain desire of fame,
In every age, is every woman's aim;
With courtship pleas'd, of silly toasters proud,
Fond of a train, and happy in a crowd;
On each proud fop bestowing some kind glance,
Each conquest owing to some loose advance;
While vain coquets affect to be pursued,
And think they 're virtuous, if not grossly lewd.
Let this great maxim be my virtue's guide;
In part she is to blame that has been try'd—
He comes too near, that comes to be deny'd.

TOWN ECLOGUES.

The original edition of the Town Eclogues has this title:

COURT POEMS.

1. THE BASSET TABLE, AN ECLOGUE.
2. THE DRAWING ROOM.
3. THE TOILET.

PUBLISHED FAITHFULLY AS THEY WERE FOUND IN A POCKET-BOOK TAKEN UP IN WESTMINSTER HALL, THE LAST DAY OF THE LORD WINTON'S TRIAL.

London: printed for J. Robarts, near the Oxford Arms, in Warwick Street, 1706. Price sixpence.

Then follows an

ADVERTISEMENT.

The reader is acquainted from the title-page, how I came possessed of the following poems. All that I have to add, is only a word or two concerning their author. Upon reading them over at St. James's Coffee-house, they were attributed, by the general voice, to be the production of a lady of quality. When I produced them at Button's, the poetical jury there brought in a different verdict; and the foreman strenuously insisted upon it, that Mr. Gay was the man, and declared, in comparing the Basset Table with that gentleman's Pastorals, he found the style and turn of thought to be evidently the same, which confirmed him, and his brethren, in the sentence they had pronounced. Not content with these two decisions, I was resolved to call in an umpire; nd accordingly chose

gentleman of distinguished merit, who lives not far from Chelsea, I sent him the papers, which he returned to me the next day with this answer:—

"Sir,—Depend upon it, these lines could come from no other hand than the judicious translator of Homer."

Thus having impartially given the sentiments of the Town, I hope I may deserve thanks for the pains I have taken in endeavouring to find out the author of these valuable performances, and every body is at liberty to bestow the laurel as they please.

The above date, 1706, is evidently a misprint. Lord Winton's trial was in 1716. W.

TOWN ECLOGUES. (1)

Written in the Year 1715.

MONDAY.

ROXANA; OR, THE DRAWING-ROOM.

Roxana, from the court retiring late,
Sigh'd her soft sorrows at St. James's gate,
Such heavy thoughts lay brooding in her breast,
Not her own chairmen with more weight oppress'd;
They groan the cruel load they 're doom'd to bear;
She in these gentle sounds express'd her care.
"Was it for this that I these roses wear?
For these new-set the jewels for my hair?
Ah! Princess! (2) with what zeal have I pursued!
Almost forgot the duty of a prude.
Thinking I never could attend too soon,
I 've miss'd my prayers, to get me dress'd by noon.
For thee, ah! what for thee did I resign?
My pleasures, passions, all that e'er was mine.
I sacrific'd both modesty and ease,
Left operas and went to filthy plays;
Double-entendres shock my tender ear;
Yet even this for thee I choose to bear.
In glowing youth, when nature bids be gay.
And every joy of life before me lay,
By honour prompted, and by pride restrain'd,
The pleasures of the young my soul disdain'd:

(1) Written as a parody upon the Pastorals of Pope and Philips, which had then their full share of fame. The same idea was afterwards pursued by C. Jenner, and his Town Eclogues are printed in Dodsley's Collection. (2) The Princess of Wales, afterwards Queen Caroline.

Sermons I sought, and with a mien severe
Censured my neighbours, and said daily pray'r.
"Alas! how changed—with the same sermon-mien
That once I prayed, the *What d' ye call't* (1) I 've seen.
Ah! cruel Princess, for thy sake I 've lost
That reputation which so dear had cost:
I, who avoided every public place,
When bloom and beauty bade me show my face,
Now near thee constant every night abide
With never-failing duty by thy side;
Myself and daughters standing on a row,
To all the foreigners a goodly show!
Oft had your drawing-room been sadly thin,
And merchants' wives close by the chair been seen,
Had not I amply fill'd the empty space,
And saved your Highness from the dire disgrace.
"Yet Coquetilla's artifice prevails
When all my merit and my duty fails;
That Coquetilla, whose deluding airs
Corrupt our virgins, still our youth ensnares;
So sunk her character, so lost her fame,
Scarce visited before your Highness came;
Yet for the bed-chamber 't is her you choose,
When zeal and fame and virtue you refuse.
Ah! worthy choice! not one of all your train!
Whom censure blasts not, and dishonours stain
Let the nice hind now suckle dirty pigs,
And the proud pea-hen hatch the cuckoo's eggs!
Let Iris leave her paint and own her age,
And grave Suffolka wed a giddy page!
A greater miracle is daily view'd,
A virtuous Princess with a court so lewd.
"I know thee, court! with all thy treach'rous wiles,
Thy false caresses and undoing smiles!
Ah! Princess, learn'd in all the courtly arts,
To cheat our hopes, and yet to gain our hearts!
"Large lovely bribes are the great statesman's aim;
And the neglected patriot follows fame.
The Prince is ogled; some the King pursue;
But your Roxana only follows you.
Despised Roxana, cease, and try to find
Some other, since the Princess proves unkind:
Perhaps it is not hard to find at court,
If not a greater, a more firm support."

(1) A farce, by Gay.

TUESDAY.—ST. JAMES'S COFFEE-HOUSE.

SILLIANDER AND PATCH.

THOU, who so many favours hast received,
Wond'rous to tell, and hard to be believed,
Oh! Hervey, (1) to my lays attention lend,
Hear how two lovers boastingly contend;
Like thee successful, such their bloomy youth,
Renown'd alike for gallantry and truth.

"St. James's bell had toll'd some wretches in
(As tatter'd riding-hoods alone could sin),
The happier sinners now their charms recruit,
And to their manteaus their complexion suit;
The opera queens had finish'd half their faces,
And city dames already taken places;
Fops of all kinds, to see the Lion, run;
The beauties stay till the first act 's begun,
And beaux step home to put fresh linen on.
No well-dress'd youth in coffee-house remain'd
But pensive Patch, who on the window lean'd;
And Silliander, that, alert and gay,
First pick'd his teeth, and then began to say:

SILLIANDER.

Why all these sighs? ah! why so pensive grown?
Some cause there is why thus you sit alone,
Does hapless passion all this sorrow move?
Or dost thou envy where the ladies love?

PATCH.

If, whom they love, my envy must pursue,
'Tis true at least I never envy you.

SILLIANDER.

No, I 'm unhappy—you are in the right—
'Tis you they favour, and 't is me they slight.
Yet I could tell, but that I hate to boast,
A club of ladies where 't is me they toast.

PATCH.

Toasting does seldom any favour prove;
Like us, they never toast the thing they love.
A certain duke one night my health begun;
With cheerful pledges round the room it run,
'Till the young Silvia, press'd to drink it too,
Started, and vow'd she knew not what to do:

(1) Lord Viscount Hervey.

What, drink a fellow's health! she died with shame;
Yet blush'd whenever she pronounc'd my name.

SILLIANDER.

Ill fates pursue me, may I never find
The dice propitious, or the ladies kind,
If fair Miss Flippy's fan I did not tear,
And one from me she condescends to wear!

PATCH.

Women are always ready to receive;
'T is then a favour when the sex will give.
A lady (but she is too great to name),
Beauteous in person, spotless in her fame,
With gentle strugglings let me force this ring';
Another day may give another thing.

SILLIANDER.

I could say something—see this billet-doux—
And as for presents—look upon my shoe—
These buckles were not forc'd, nor half a theft,
But a young countess fondly made the gift.

PATCH.

My countess is more nice, more artful too,
Affects to fly, that I may fierce pursue:
This snuff-box which I begg'd, she still deny'd,
And when I strove to snatch it, seem'd to hide;
She laugh'd and fled, and as I sought to seize,
With affectation cramm'd it down her stays;
Yet hop'd she did not place it there unseen,
I press'd her breasts, and pull'd it from between.

SILLIANDER.

Last night, as I stood ogling of her Grace,
Drinking delicious poison from her face,
The soft enchantress did that face decline,
Nor ever rais'd her eyes to meet with mine;
With sudden art some secret did pretend,
Lean'd cross two chairs to whisper to a friend,
While the stiff whalebone with the motion rose,
And thousand beauties to my sight expose.

PATCH.

Early this morn—(but I was ask'd to come)
I drank bohea in Celia's dressing-room:

Warm from her bed, to me alone within,
Her night-gown fasten'd with a single pin;
Her night-clothes tumbled with resistless grace,
And her bright hair play'd careless round her face;
Reaching the kettle made her gown unpin,
She wore no waistcoat, and her shift was thin.

SILLIANDER.

See Titiana driving to the park!
Haste! let us follow, 't is not yet too dark:
In her all beauties of the spring are seen,
Her cheeks are rosy, and her mantle green.

PATCH.

See Tintoretta to the opera goes!
Haste! or the crowd will not permit our bows;
In her the glory of the heav'ns we view,
Her eyes are star-like, and her mantle blue.

SILLIANDER.

What colour does in Celia's stockings shine?
Reveal that secret, and the price is thine.

PATCH.

What are her garters? tell me if you can;
I 'll freely own thee far the happier man.

Thus Patch continued his heroic strain,
While Silliander but contends in vain;
After a contest so important gain'd,
Unrivall'd Patch in every ruelle reign'd

WEDNESDAY.—THE TETE-A-TETE.

DANCINDA.

"No, fair Dancinda, no; you strive in vain
To calm my care, and mitigate my pain;
If all my sighs, my cares, can fail to move,
Ah! soothe me not with fruitless vows of love."
Thus Strephon spoke. Dancinda thus replied;
"What must I do to gratify your pride?
Too well you know (ungrateful as thou art)
How much you triumph in this tender heart:
What proof of love remains for me to grant?
Yet still you teaze me with some new complaint.
Oh! would to Heaven!—but the fond wish is vain—
Too many favours had not made it plain!

But such a passion breaks through all disguise,
Love reddens on my cheek, and wishes in my eyes.
Is 't not enough (inhuman and unkind!)
I own the secret conflict of my mind?
You cannot know what secret pain I prove,
When I, with burning blushes, own I love.
You see my artless joy at your approach,
I sigh, I faint, I tremble at your touch;
And in your absence all the world I shun;
I hate mankind, and curse the cheering sun;
Still as I fly, ten thousand swains pursue;
Ten thousand swains I sacrifice to you.
I show you all my heart without disguise:
But these are tender proofs that you despise—
I see too well what wishes you pursue;
You would not only conquer, but undo:
You, cruel victor, weary of your flame,
Would seek a cure in my eternal shame;
And, not content my honour to subdue,
Now strive to triumph o'er my virtue too.
O Love! a god indeed to womankind,
Whose arrows burn me, and whose fetters bind,
Avenge thy altars, vindicate thy fame,
And blast these traitors that profane thy name;
Who, by pretending to thy sacred fire,
Raise cursed trophies to impure desire.
"Have you forgot with what ensnaring art
You first seduc'd this fond uncautious heart?
Then as I fled, did you not kneeling cry,
'Turn, cruel beauty; whither would you fly?
Why all these doubts? why this distrustful fear?
No impious wishes shall offend your ear:
Nor ever shall my boldest hopes pretend
Above the title of a tender friend;
Blest, if my lovely goddess will permit
My humble vows thus sighing at her feet.
The tyrant, Love, that in my bosom reigns,
The god himself submits to wear your chains;
You shall direct his course, his ardour tame,
And check the fury of his wildest flame.'
"Unpractis'd youth is easily deceiv'd;
Sooth'd by such sounds, I listen'd and believ'd:
Now quite forgot that soft submissive fear,
You dare to ask what I must blush to hear.

"Could I forget the honour of my race,
And meet your wishes fearless of disgrace;
Could passion o'er my tender youth prevail,
And all my mother's pious maxims fail;
Yet to preserve your heart (which still must be,
False as it is, for ever dear to me)
This fatal proof of love I would not give,
Which you'd contemn the moment you receive.
The wretched she, who yields to guilty joys,
A man may pity, but he must despise.
Your ardour ceas'd, I then should see you shun
The wretched victim by your arts undone.
Yet if I could that cold indifference bear,
What more would strike me with the last despair,
With this reflection would my soul be torn,
To know I merited your cruel scorn.
"Has love no pleasures free from guilt or fear?
Pleasures less fierce, more lasting, more sincere?
Thus let us gently kiss and fondly gaze;
Love is a child, and like a child he plays.
"O Strephon! if you would continue just,
If love be something more than brutal lust,
Forbear to ask what I must still deny,
This bitter pleasure, this destructive joy,
So closely follow'd by the dismal train
Of cutting shame, and guilt's heart-piercing pain."
She paus'd, and fix'd her eyes upon her fan!
He took a pinch of snuff and thus began:
"Madam, if love——" But he could say no more,
For Mademoiselle came rapping at the door.
The dangerous moments no adieus afford;
—"Begone," she cries, "I'm sure I hear my lord."
The lover starts from his unfinish'd loves,
To snatch his hat, and seek his scatter'd gloves:
The sighing dame to meet her dear prepares,
While Strephon, cursing, slips down the back stairs.

THURSDAY.—THE BASSETTE-TABLE.

SMILINDA AND CARDELIA.

CARDELIA.

THE *Bassette-Table* spread, the Tallier come;
Why stands Smilinda in her dressing-room?
Rise, pensive nymph! the Tallier waits for you.

SMILINDA.

Ah! madam, since my Sharper is untrue,
I joyless make my once ador'd *alpiu*.
I saw him stand behind Ombrelia's chair,
And whisper with that soft deluding air,
And those feign'd sighs, which cheat the list'ning fair.

CARDELIA.

Is this the cause of your romantic strains?
A mightier grief my heavier heart sustains.
As you by Love, so I by Fortune cross'd,
In one bad *deal* three *septlevas* have lost.

SMILINDA.

Is that the grief which you compare with mine!
With ease the smiles of Fortune I resign:
Would all my gold in one bad *deal* were gone;
Were lovely Sharper mine, and mine alone!

CARDELIA.

A lover lost is but a common care:
And prudent nymphs against that change prepare.
The knave of clubs thrice lost: oh! who could guess
This fatal stroke! this unforeseen distress?

SMILINDA.

See! Betty Loveit, very *à-propos*,
She all the care of *love* and *play* does know;
Dear Betty shall th' important point decide;
Betty, who oft the pain of each has try'd;
Impartial she shall say who suffers most,
By *cards' ill usage*, or by *lovers lost*.

LOVEIT.

Tell, tell your griefs; attentive will I stay,
Though time is precious, and I want some tea.

CARDELIA.

Behold this *equipage*, by Mathers wrought,
With fifty guineas (a great penn'orth!) bought.
See on the tooth-pick, Mars and Cupid strive;
And both the struggling figures seem alive.
Upon the bottom shines the queen's bright face;
A myrtle foliage round the thimble case.
Jove, Jove himself, does on the scissars shine;
The metal, and the workmanship divine!

SMILINDA.

This *snuff-box*, once the pledge of Sharper's love,
When rival beauties for the present strove;
At Corticelli's he the raffle won;
Then first his passion was in public shown:
Hazardia blush'd, and turn'd her head aside,
A rival's envy (all in vain) to hide.
This *snuff-box*—on the hinge see brilliants shine:
This *snuff-box* will I stake, the prize is mine.

CARDELIA.

Alas! far lesser losses than I bear,
Have made a soldier sigh, a lover swear,
And, oh! what makes the disappointment hard,
'Twas my own lord that drew the fatal card.
In complaisance I took the *queen* he gave,
Though my own secret wish was for the knave.
The *knave* won Sonica which I had chose;
And the next *pull* my *septleva* I lose.

SMILINDA.

But, ah! what aggravates the killing smart,
The cruel thought that stabs me to the heart;
This cursed Ombrelia, this undoing fair,
By whose vile arts this heavy grief I bear;
She, at whose name I shed these spiteful tears,
She owes to me the very charms she wears:
An awkward thing when first she came to town;
Her shape unfashion'd, and her face unknown:
She was my friend, I taught her first to spread
Upon her sallow cheeks enlivening red.
I introduced her to the park and plays;
And by my int'rest Cosins made her stays.
Ungrateful wretch! with mimic airs grown pert,
She dares to steal my favourite lover's heart.

CARDELIA.

Wretch that I was! how often have I swore,
When Winnall tallied, I would *punt* no more?
I know the bite, yet to my ruin run;
And see the folly which I cannot shun.

SMILINDA.

How many maids have Sharper's vows deceiv'd!
How many curs'd the moment they believ'd!

Yet his known falsehoods could no warning prove;
Ah! what is warning to a maid in love?

CARDELIA.

But of what marble must that breast be form'd,
To gaze on Bassette, and remain unwarm'd?
When *kings*, *queens*, *knaves*, are set in decent rank,
Expos'd in glorious heaps the tempting bank,
Guineas, half-guineas, all the shining train;
The winner's pleasure, and the loser's pain:
In bright confusion open *rouleaus* lie,
They strike the soul, and glitter in the eye.
Fir'd by the sight, all reason I disdain;
My passions rise, and will not bear the rein.
Look upon Bassette, you who reason boast;
And see if reason must not *there* be lost.

SMILINDA.

What more than marble must that heart compose,
Can hearken coldly to my Sharper's vows?
Then when he trembles, when his blushes rise,
When awful love seems melting in his eyes,
With eager beats his Mechlin cravat moves:
He loves, I whisper to myself, *he loves*!
Such unfeign'd passion in his looks appears,
I lose all mem'ry of my former fears:
My panting heart confesses all his charms,
I yield at once, and sink into his arms:
Think of that moment, you who prudence boast,
For such a moment, prudence well were lost.

CARDELIA.

At the *Groom-porter's* batter'd bullies play,
Somes *dukes* at Marybone bowl time away.
But who the bowl, or rattling dice, compares
To Bassette's heavenly joys and pleasing cares?

SMILINDA.

Soft Simplicetta doats upon a beau;
Prudina likes a man, and laughs at show.
Their several graces in my Sharper meet;
Strong as the footman, as the master sweet.

LOVEIT.

Cease your contention, which has been too long;
I grow impatient, and the tea too strong.

Attend, and yield to what I now decide;
The *equipage* shall grace Smilinda's side:
The snuff-box to Cardelia I decree:
Now leave complaining, and begin your *tea*.

FRIDAY.—THE TOILETTE.

LYDIA.

Now twenty springs had cloth'd the Park with green,
Since Lydia knew the blossom of fifteen;
No lovers now her morning hours molest,
And catch her at her toilet half undrest.
The thund'ring knocker wakes the street no more,
Nor chairs, nor coaches, crowd the silent door;
Now at the window all her mornings pass,
Or at the dumb devotion of her glass:
Reclined upon her arm she pensive sate,
And cursed th' inconstancy of man too late.

"O youth! O spring of life, for ever lost!
No more my name shall reign the fav'rite toast:
On glass no more the diamond grave my name,
And lines mis-spelt record my lover's flame:
Nor shall side-boxes watch my wand'ring eyes,
And, as they catch the glance, in rows arise
With humble bows; nor white-glov'd beaux encroach
In crowds behind, to guard me to my coach.

"What shall I do to spend the hateful day?
At chapel, shall I wear the morn away?
Who there appears at these unmodish hours,
But ancient matrons with their frizzled tow'rs,
And gray religious maids? My presence there,
Amidst that sober train, would own despair:
Nor am I yet so old, nor is my glance
As yet fix'd wholly on devotion's trance.
Strait then I 'll dress, and take my wonted range
Through India shops, to Motteux's, or the Change,
Where the tall jar erects its stately pride,
With antic shapes in China's azure dy'd;
There careless lies a rich brocade unroll'd,
Here shines a cabinet with burnish'd gold.
But then, alas! I must be forc'd to pay,
And bring no penn'orths, not a fan away!

"How am I curs'd, unhappy and forlorn!
My lover's triumph, and my sex's scorn!
False is the pompous grief of youthful heirs;
False are the loose coquet's inveigling airs;

False is the crafty courtier's plighted word;
False are the dice when gamesters stamp the board;
False is the sprightly widow's public tear;
Yet these to Damon's oaths are all sincere.
"For what young flirt, base man, am I abus'd?
To please your wife am I unkindly us'd?
'Tis true her face may boast the peach's bloom;
But does her nearer whisper breathe perfume?
I own her taper shape is form'd to please;
But don't you see her unconfin'd by stays?
She doubly to fifteen may claim pretence;
Alike we read it in her face and sense.
Insipid, servile thing! whom I disdain!
Her phlegm can best support the marriage chain.
Damon is practis'd in the modish life,
Can hate, and yet be civil to his wife:
He games, he drinks, he swears, he fights, he roves;
Yet Chloe can believe he fondly loves.
Mistress and wife by turns supply his need;
A miss for pleasure, and a wife for breed.
Powder'd with diamonds, free from spleen or care,
She can a sullen husband's humour bear;
Her credulous friendship, and her stupid ease,
Have often been my jest in happier days;
How Chloe boasts and triumphs in my pains!
To her he 's faithful; 't is to me he feigns.
Am I that stupid (1) thing to bear neglect,
And force a smile, not daring to suspect?
No, perjur'd man! a wife may be content;
But you shall find a mistress can resent."
Thus love-sick Lydia raved; her maid appears,
And in her faithful hand the band-box bears; (2)
(The cestus, that reform'd inconstant Jove,
Not better fill'd with what allur'd to love;)
"How well this riband's gloss becomes your face!"
She cries in rapture; "then so sweet a lace! (3)
How charmingly you look! so bright! so fair!
'T is to your eyes the head-dress owes its air!"
Strait Lydia smil'd; the comb adjusts her locks;
And at the play-house Harry keeps her box.

(1) In the original edition, "senseless thing."
(2) In the original editon,

"With steady hand, the hand-box charge the bears."

and the next two lines do not appear.
(3) In the original edition, "grace."

SATURDAY.—THE SMALL-POX.

FLAVIA.

THE wretched Flavia, on her couch reclin'd,
Thus breath'd the anguish of a wounded mind,
A glass revers'd in her right hand she bore,
For now she shunn'd the face she sought before.
"How am I chang'd! alas! how am I grown
A frightful spectre, to myself unkown!
Where 's my complexion? where my radiant bloom,
That promis'd happiness for years to come?
Then with what pleasure I this face survey'd!
To look once more, my visits oft delay'd!
Charm'd with the view, a fresher red would rise,
And a new life shot sparkling from my eyes!
"Ah! faithless glass, my wonted bloom restore;
Alas! I rave, that bloom is now no more!
The greatest good the gods on men bestow,
Ev'n youth itself, to me is useless now.
There was a time (oh! that I could forget!)
When opera-tickets pour'd before my feet;
And at the ring, where brightest beauties shine,
The earliest cherries of the spring were mine.
Witness, O Lilly; and thou, Motteux, tell,
How much japan these eyes have made ye sell.
With what contempt ye saw me oft despise
The humble offer of the raffled prize;
For at each raffle still each prize I bore,
With scorn rejected, or with triumph wore!
Now beauty's fled, and presents are no more!
"For me the patriot has the house forsook,
And left debates to catch a passing look:
For me the soldier has soft verses writ:
For me the beau has aim'd to be a wit.
For me the wit to nonsense was betray'd;
The gamester has for me his dun delay'd,
And overseen the card he would have play'd.
The bold and haughty, by success made vain,
Aw'd by my eyes, have trembled to complain:
The bashful 'squire, touch'd by a wish unknown,
Has dar'd to speak with spirit not his own:
Fir'd by one wish, all did alike adore;
Now beauty 's fled, and lovers are no more!
"As round the room I turn my weeping eyes,
New unaffected scenes of sorrow rise.

Far from my sight that killing picture bear,
The face disfigure, and the canvas tear :
That picture which with pride I us'd to show.
The lost resemblance but upbraids me now.
And thou, my toilette! where I oft have sate,
While hours unheeded pass'd in deep debate
How curls should fall, or where a patch to place;
If blue or scarlet best became my face :
Now on some happier nymph your aid bestow;
On fairer heads, ye useless jewels, glow!
No borrow'd lustre can my charms restore!
Beauty is fled, and dress is now no more!
" Ye meaner beauties, I permit ye shine;
Go, triumph in the hearts that once were mine:
But 'midst your triumphs with confusion know,
'Tis to my ruin all your charms ye owe.
Would pitying Heav'n restore my wonted mien,
Ye still might move unthought of and unseen :
But oh, how vain, how wretched is the boast
Of beauty faded, and of empire lost!
What now is left but, weeping, to deplore
My beauty fled, and empire now no more!
" Ye cruel chemists, what withheld your aid?
Could no pomatum save a trembling maid?
How false and trifling is that art ye boast!
No art can give me back my beauty lost.
In tears, surrounded by my friends, I lay
Mask'd o'er, and trembled at the sight of day;
Mirmillio came my fortune to deplore
(A golden-headed cane well carv'd he bore),
Cordials, he cry'd, my spirits must restore!
Beauty is fled, and spirit is no more!
" Galen, the grave officious Squirt, was there,
With fruitless grief and unavailing care;
Machaon too, the great Machaon, known
By his red cloak and his superior frown;
And why, he cry'd, this grief and this despair?
You shall again be well, again be fair;
Believe my oath (with that an oath he swore);
False was his oath; my beauty was no more!
" Cease, hapless maid, no more thy tale pursue,
Forsake mankind, and bid the world adieu!
Monarchs and beauties rule with equal sway:
All strive to serve, and glory to obey :

Alike unpitied when depos'd they grow,
Men mock the idol of their former vow.
" Adieu! ye parks—in some obscure recess,
Where gentle streams will weep at my distress,
Where no false friend will in my grief take part,
And mourn my ruin with a joyful heart;
There let me live in some deserted place,
There hide in shades this lost inglorious face.
Plays, operas, circles, I no more must view!
My toilette, patches, all the world, adieu!"

VERSES,

Written in the Chiosk of the British Palace, at Pera, overlooking the city of Constantinople, Dec. 26, 1718.

GIVE me, great God! said I, a little farm,
In summer shady, and in winter warm;
Where a clear spring gives birth to murm'ring brooks,
By nature gliding down the mossy rocks.
Not artfully by leaden pipes convey'd,
Or greatly falling in a forc'd cascade,
Pure and unsully'd winding through the shade.
All bounteous Heaven has added to my prayer,
A softer climate and a purer air.
Our frozen isle now chilling winter binds,
Deform'd by rains, and rough with blasting winds;
The wither'd woods grow white with hoary frost,
By driving storms their verdant beauty lost;
The trembling birds their leafless covert shun,
And seek in distant climes a warmer sun:
The water-nymphs their silent urns deplore,
Ev'n Thames, benumb'd, 's a river now no more:
The barren meads no longer yield delight,
By glist'ring snows made painful to the sight.
Here summer reigns with one eternal smile,
Succeeding harvests bless the happy soil;
Fair fertile, fields, to whom indulgent Heaven
Has ev'ry charm of ev'ry season given.
No killing cold deforms the beauteous year,
The springing flowers no coming winter fear.
But as the parent rose decays and dies,
The infant buds with brighter colours rise,
And with fresh sweets the mother's scent supplies.

Near them the violet grows with odours blest,
And blooms in more than Tyrian purple drest;
The rich jonquils their golden beams display,
And shine in glory's emulating day;
The peaceful groves their verdant leaves retain,
The streams still murmur, undefil'd with rain,
And tow'ring greens adorn the fruitful plain.
The warbling kind uninterrupted sing,
Warm'd with enjoyments of perpetual spring.
Here, at my window, I at once survey
The crowded city and resounding sea;
In distant views the Asian mountains rise,
And lose their snowy summits in the skies;
Above these mountains proud Olympus tow'rs,
The parliamental seat of heavenly pow'rs!
New to the sight, my ravish'd eyes admire
Each gilded crescent and each antique spire,
The marble mosques, beneath whose ample domes
Fierce warlike sultans sleep in peaceful tombs;
Those lofty structures, once the Christians' boast,
Their names, their beauty, and their honours lost;
Those altars bright with gold and sculpture graced,
By barb'rous zeal of savage foes defaced;
Soph'a alone, her ancient name retains,
Though th' unbeliever now her shrine profanes;
Where holy saints have died in sacred cells,
Where monarchs pray'd, the frantic dervise dwells.
How art thou fall'n, imperial city, low!
Where are thy hopes of Roman glory now?
Where are thy palaces by prelates rais'd?
Where Grecian artists all their skill display'd,
Before the happy sciences decay'd;
So vast, that youthful kings might here reside,
So splendid, to content a patriarch's pride;
Convents where emperors profess'd of old,
The labour'd pillars that their triumphs told;
Vain monuments of them that once were great,
Sunk undistinguish'd by one common fate;
One little spot the tenure small contains,
Of Greek nobility the poor remains.
Where other Helens, with like powerful charms,
Had once engag'd the warring world in arms;
Those names which royal ancestors can boast,
In mean mechanic arts obscurely lost;

Those eyes a second Homer might inspire,
Fix'd at the loom, destroy their useless fire;
Griev'd at a view, which struck upon my mind
The short-liv'd vanity of humankind.
In gaudy objects I indulge my sight,
And turn where Eastern pomp gives gay delight;
See the vast train in various habits drest,
By the bright scimitar and sable vest,
The proud vizier distinguish'd o'er the rest!
Six slaves in gay attire his bridle hold,
His bridle rich with gems and stirrups gold;
His snowy steed adorn'd with costly pride,
Whole troops of soldiers mounted by his side,
These top the plumy crest Arabian courtiers guide.
With artful duty all decline their eyes,
No bellowing shouts of noisy crowds arise;
Silence, in solemn state, the march attends,
Till at the dread divan the slow procession ends.
Yet not these prospects all profusely gay,
The gilded navy that adorns the sea,
The rising city in confusion fair,
Magnificently form'd, irregular,
Where woods and palaces at once surprise,
Gardens on gardens, domes on domes arise,
And endless beauties tire the wand'ring eyes.
So soothe my wishes, or so charm my mind,
As this retreat secure from humankind.
No knave's successful craft does spleen excite,
No coxcomb's tawdry splendour shocks my sight;
No mob-alarm awakes my female fear,
No praise my mind, nor envy hurts my ear,
Ev'n fame itself can hardly reach me here;
Impertinence, with all her tattling train,
Fair-sounding flattery's delicious bane;
Censorious folly, noisy party rage,
The thousand tongues with which she must engage
Who dares have virtue in a vicious age.

EPILOGUE (1) TO MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

Designed to be spoken by Mrs. Oldfield.

WHAT could luxurious woman wish for more,
To fix her joys, or to extend her pow'r?

(1) This epilogue was intended for a play on the story of Mary Queen of Scots, which Philip Duke of Wharton, began to write, but never

Their every wish was in this Mary seen,
Gay, witty, youthful, beauteous, and a queen.
Vain useless blessings with ill-conduct join'd!
Light as the air, and fleeting as the wind.
Whatever poets write, and lovers vow,
Beauty, what poor omnipotence hast thou!
Queen Bess had wisdom, council, power and laws;
How few espous'd a wretched beauty's cause!
Learn thence, ye fair, more solid charms to prize;
Contemn the idle flatt'rers of your eyes.
The brightest object shines but while 't is new:
That influence lessens by familiar view.
Monarchs and beauties rule with equal sway,
All strive to serve, and glory to obey;
Alike unpitied when depos'd they grow—
Men mock the idol of their former vow.
Two great examples have been shown to-day,
To what sure ruin passion does betray;
What long repentance to short joys is due;
When reason rules, what glory must ensue.
If you will love, love like Eliza then;
Love for amusement, like those traitors, men.
Think that the pastime of a leisure hour
She favour'd oft—but never shar'd her pow'r.
The traveller by desert wolves pursu'd,
If by his art the savage foe 's subdu'd,
The world will still the noble act applaud,
Though victory was gain'd by needful fraud.
Such is, my tender sex, our helpless case;
And such the barbarous heart, hid by the begging face;
By passion fir'd, and not withheld by shame,
They cruel hunters are, we trembling game.
Trust me, dear ladies (for I know 'em well),
They burn to triumph, and they sigh to tell:
Cruel to them that yield, cullies to them that sell.
Believe me, 'tis by far the wiser course,
Superior art should meet superior force:
Hear, but be faithful to your int'rest still:
Secure your hearts—then fool with whom you will.

finished. No part of the play now remains, but these four lines:

Sure were I free, and Norfolk were a prisoner,
I 'd fly with more impatience to his arms
Than the poor Israelite gaz'd on the serpent,
When life was the reward of every look.

Walpole's Catalogue, vol. ii. p. 134.

EPILOGUE TO THE TRAGEDY OF CATO.

You see in ancient Rome what folly reign'd;
A folly British men would have disdain'd.
Here 's none so weak to pity Cato's case,
Who might have liv'd, and had a handsome place;
But rashly vain, and insolently great,
He perish'd by his fault—and not his fate.
Thank Heav'n! our patriots better ends pursue,
With something more than glory in their view.
Poets write morals—priests for martyrs preach—
Neither such fools to practise what they teach.
Though your dear country much you wish to serve,
For bonny Britons 'tis too hard to starve;
Or what's all one, to any generous mind,
From girls, champagne, and gaming, be confin'd;
Portius might well obey his sire's command,
Returning to his small paternal land;
A low estate was ample to support
His private life, far distant from the court!
Far from the crowd of emulating beaux,
Where Martia never wanted birth-day clothes.
For you, who live in these more polish'd days,
To spend your money, lo! then thousand ways;
Dice may run ill, or duns demand their due,
And ways to get (God knows) are very few;
In times so differing, who shall harshly blame
Our modern heroes, not to act the same?

TO A FRIEND ON HIS TRAVELS.

From this vile town, immersed in smoke and care,
To you who brighten in a purer air,
Your faithful friend conveys her tenderest thought
(Though now perhaps neglected and forgot).
May blooming health your wonted mirth restore,
And every pleasure crown your every hour;
Caress'd, esteem'd, and loved, your merit known,
And foreign lands admire you, like your own;
Whilst I in silence various fortunes bear,
Distracted with the rage of bosom-war:
My restless fever tears my changeful brain,
With mix'd ideas of delight and pain;
Sometimes soft views my morning dreams employ
In the faint dawn of visionary joy;

Which rigid reason quickly drives away—
I seek the shade and fly from rising day:
In pleasing madness meet some moments' ease,
And fondly cherish my beloved disease.
If female weakness melt my woman's mind,
At least no weakness in the choice I find;
Not sooth'd to softness by a warbling flute,
Nor the bought merit of a birth-day suit;
Not lost my heart by the surprising skill
In opera tunes, in dancing, or quadrille.
The only charm my inclination moves
Is such a virtue, Heaven itself approves!
A soul superior to each vulgar view,
Great, steady, gentle, generous, and true.
How I regret my trifling hours past,
And look with sorrow o'er the dreary waste!
In false pursuits and vanity bestow'd,
The perfect image of a dirty road;
Through puddles oft, o'er craggy rocks I stray,
A tiresome dull uncomfortable way:
And after toiling long through thick and thin
To reach some meanly mercenary inn,
The bills are high, and very bad the fare,
I curse the wretched entertainment there:
And, jogging on, resolve to stop no more
Where gaudy signs invite me to the door.

TO THE SAME.

THOUGH old in ill, the traitor sure should find
Some secret sting transfix his guilty mind.
Though bribes or favour may protect his fame,
Or fear restrain invectives on his name;
None 'quits himself—his own impartial thought
Condemns—and conscience shall record the fault.
Yet more, my friend! your happy state may bear
This disappointment, as below your care.
For what you have, return to Heav'n your thanks;
Few share the prizes, many draw the blanks.
Of breach of promise loudly you complain.
Have you then known the world so long in vain?
Worse than the Iron age, our impious times
Have learn'd to laugh at most flagitious crimes.
Are you to know that 'tis a jest to find
Unthinking honesty pervade the mind?

At best, they say, the man is strangely odd
Who keeps his oath, and can believe a God.
This was the cant when Edward held the throne,
Before Spinosa wrote, or Hobbes was known;
When the gilt Bible was the king's delight,
When prayer preceded day, and hymns the night,
Now softening eunuchs sing Italian airs,
The dancing dame to midnight ball repairs.
Now, if an honest man (like you) I view,
Contemning interest, and to virtue true,
I deem, he deviates from nature's rules,
Like burning hills, or petrifying pools.
I stand astonish'd at the strange portent,
And think some revolution the event;
As all grave heads were startled, as they heard
That a new comet in the west appear'd;
When from a human mother (1) rabbits sprung,
And Ward his pills like hand-grenadoes flung;
When *gratis* scattering cures amidst the crowd—
A miracle! as Charteris (2) swears aloud—
A greater miracle I daily see,
The ancient faith of Pius reign in thee.
Observe the wretch, who has that faith forsook,
How clear his voice, and how assured his look!
Like innocence, and as serenely bold,
Conscious protection of almighty gold!
Whilst thus he reasons to relieve his fears:
"Oft I've deceived, yet still have kept my ears.
I have been threat'ned for a broken vow,
And yet successively have laugh'd till now,
And will laugh on, my fortune's not the worse,
When starving cullies rail, or vainly curse."
Shall then the villain 'scape? such knaves as he
Be rich and safe, and from all vengeance free?
Consider, friend, but coolly, and you 'll find
Revenge the frailty of a feeble mind;
Nor think he 'scapes though he should never feel
The pangs of poison, or the force of steel.
There is a time when conscience shakes the soul,
When Toland's tenets cannot fear control,
When secret anguish fills the anxious breast,
Vacant from business, nor composed by rest;

(1) Mary Tofts, the celebrated rabbit-woman of Godalmin.
(2) Colonel Charteris, of infamous memory, satirized by Pope and Arbuthnot.

Then dreams invade, the injured gods appear
All arm'd with thunder, and awake his fear;
The wretch will start at every flash that flies,
Grow pale at the first murmur of the skies;
Then, if a fever fires corrupted blood,
In every fit he feels the hand of God.
Trembling, and sunk into the last despair,
He dares not offer one repenting prayer;
For how can hope with desperate guilt agree?
And the worst beast is worthier life than he;
This, at the best, will be his certain fate,
Or Heav'n may sooner think his crimes complete.

FRAGMENT.

* * * * * *

Let mules and asses in that circle tread,
And proud of trappings toss a feather'd head;
Leave you the stupid business of the state,
Strive to be happy, and despise the great:
Come where the Graces guide the gentle day,
Where Venus rules amidst her native sea,
Where at her altar gallantries appear,
And even Wisdom dares not show severe.

* * * * * *
* * * * * *

TO MR. ———.

For ever blest be that prolific brain
Which can such store of images contain!
Thus the charged trees, with blooming odours crown'd,
Shed their fair blossoms with profusion round;
So swells the brook with heav'n-descended rain,
And flows meand'ring on the thirsty plain;
Such various talents were by Heav'n design'd
(Too vast a treasure for a single mind),
To please, astonish, and instruct mankind.
With a delight not to be told, I view
Themes long exhausted in your hands grow new;
Past all describing your descriptions are,
So full, so just, so bold, yet regular;
The style so varied that it wants a name,
Which, ever differing, ever is the same;

You raise or calm our passions as you please.
The human heart your powerful pen obeys.
When eager Trasimond pursues the course,
We heard the whip, and see the foaming horse;
With soft Sophronia we have wept and smiled,
So soon offended—sooner reconciled.
Go on, great author! that the world may see
How bright, when from pedantic fetters free,
True genius shines, and shines alone in thee.
Give new editions, with a noble scorn
Of insect critics, who'd obscure thy morn;
Neglect their censures, nor thy work delay,
The owls still sicken at the sight of day.

JOHN, DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH.

WHEN the proud Frenchman's strong rapacious hand
Spread over Europe ruin and command,
Our sinking temples and expiring law
With trembling dread the rolling tempest saw;
Destined a province to insulting Gaul,
This genius rose, and stopp'd the pondrous fall.
His temperate valour form'd no giddy scheme,
No victory raised him to a rage of fame;
The happy temper of his even mind
No danger e'er could shock, or conquest blind.
Fashion'd alike by Nature and by Art,
To please, engage, and int'rest ev'ry heart.
In public life by all who saw approved,
In private hours by all who knew him loved.

A CHARACTER.

THOUGH a strong vanity may you persuade—
You are not for a politician made;
Your tropes are drawn from Robin Walpole's head,
Your sense is but repeating what he said;
A useful puppy, eminently known,
As proud to father what he will not own.
Some arguments he leaves you to expose,
So valets flutter in my lord's old clothes.
But, should he strip you of his borrow'd sense,
How poorly thin your boasted eloquence!

Know your own talents better, I advise;
Be brisk, yet dull, but aim not to look wise;
In low insipid rhymes place your delight;
Laugh without jests, and without reading write.
Despised by men, in ladies' ruelles sit,
Where country coquettes bolster up your wit.
May all your minuets applauses meet!
An able coxcomb only in your feet.
By fawning lies, in leagues with court-knaves grow,
And smile on beauties whom you *do not know*.
Then, acting all the coyness of a lover,
Your *no-intrigue* endeavour to discover.
Aiming at wit, in many an evil hour,
Have the perpetual will without the power.
Conceit for *breeding*, rude for easy take,
Horseplay for wit, and noise for mirth mistake.
Love's perfect joys to perfect men belong;
Seek you but *the occasion for a song*.
Thus to the end of life may you remain
A merry blockhead, treacherous and vain.

AN ANSWER TO A LOVE-LETTER, IN VERSE.

Is it to me this sad lamenting strain?
Are Heaven's choicest gifts bestow'd in vain?
A plenteous fortune and a beauteous bride,
Your love rewarded, and content your pride;
Yet, leaving her, 't is me that you pursue,
Without one single charm—but being new.
How vile is man! how I detest the ways
Of covert falsehood and designing praise!
As tasteless, easier happiness you slight,
Ruin your joy, and mischief your delight.
Why should poor pug (the mimic of your kind)
Wear a rough chain, and be to box confined?
Some cup, perhaps, he breaks, or tears a fan,
While moves unpunish'd, the destroyer man;
Not bound by vows, and unrestrain'd by shame,
In sport you break the heart, and rend the fame.
Not that your art can be successful here,
Th' already plunder'd need no robber fear.
Nor sighs, nor charms, nor flattery, can move,
Too well secured against a second love.
Once, and but once, that devil charm'd my mind,
To reason deaf, to observation blind,

I idly hoped (what cannot Love persuade!)
My fondness equall'd and my truth repaid:
Slow to distrust, and willing to believe;
Long hush'd my doubts, I would myself deceive.
But oh! too soon—this tale would ever last—
Sleep on my wrongs, and let me think them past.
For you, who mourn with counterfeited grief,
And ask so boldly, like a begging thief,
May soon some other nymph inflict the pain
You know so well with cruel art to feign.
Though long you 've sported with Dan Cupid's dart,
You *may* see eyes, and you *may* feel a heart.
So the brisk wits who stop the evening-coach,
Laugh at the fear that follows their approach;
With idle mirth and haughty scorn despise
The passenger's pale cheek, and staring eyes;
But, seiz'd by justice, find a fright no jest,
And all the terror doubled in their breast.

LORD HERVEY TO MR. FOX.

Written at Florence, 1729, in imitation of the Sixth Ode of the Second Book of Horace.

"Septimi Gades aditure mecum."

Thou dearest youth, who taught me first to know
What pleasures from a real friendship flow;
Where neither int'rest nor deceit have part,
But all the warmth is native of the heart;
Thou know'st to comfort, soothe, or entertain,
Joy of my health, and cordial to my pain.
When life seem'd failing in her latest stage,
And fell disease anticipated age;
When wasting sickness, and afflictive pain,
By Æsculapius' sons opposed in vain,
Forced me reluctant, desperate to explore
A warmer sun, and seek a milder shore,
Thy steady love, with unexampled truth,
Forsook each gay companion of thy youth,
Whate'er the prosperous or the great employs,
Business and interest, and love's softer joys,
The weary steps of misery to attend,
To share distress, and make a wretch thy friend.
If o'er the mountain's snowy top we stray,
Where Carthage first explored the vent'rous way;

Or through the tainted air of Rome's parch'd plains,
Where want resides and superstition reigns;
Cheerful and unrepining still you bear
Each dangerous rigour of the varying year;
And kindly anxious for thy friend alone,
Lament his sufferings, and forget thy own.
Oh! would kind Heaven, those tedious sufferings past,
Permit me, Ickworth, rest and health at last!
In that loved shade, my youth's delightful seat,
My early pleasure, and my late retreat,
Where lavish Nature's favourite blessings flow,
And all the seasons all their sweets bestow;
There might I trifle carelessly away
The milder ev'ning of life's clouded day;
From business and the world's intrusion free,
With books, with love, with beauty and with thee;
No farther want, no wish, yet unpossess'd,
Could e'er disturb this unambitious breast.
Let those who Fortune's shining gifts implore,
Who sue for glory, splendour, wealth, or power,
View this inactive state with feverish eyes,
And pleasure they can never taste, despise;
Let them still court that goddess' falser joys,
Who, while she grants their pray'r, their peace destroys.
I envy not the foremost of the great,
Not Walpole's self, directing Europe's fate;
Still let him load ambition's thorny shrine,
Fame be his portion, and contentment mine.
But if the gods, sinister still, deny
(1) To live in Ickworth, let me there but die;
Thy hands to close my eyes in Death's long night,
Thy image to attract their latest sight:
Then to the grave attend thy Poet's hearse,
And love his memory as you loved his verse.

CONTINUATION

BY LADY M. W. MONTAGU.

So sung the poet in a humble strain,
With empty pockets, and a head in pain,
Where the soft clime inclined the soul to rest,
And past'ral images inspir'd the breast.

(1) In Suffolk, the seat of the Earl of Bristol.

Apollo listen'd from his heavenly bower,
And, in his health restored, express'd his power.
Pygmalion thus before the Paphian shrine,
With trembling vows address'd the power divine;
Durst hardly make his hopeless wishes known,
And scarce a greater miracle was shown—
Returning vigour glow'd in every vein,
And gay ideas flutter'd in the brain;
Back he returns to breathe his native air,
And all his first resolves are melted there!

AN EPISTLE

TO THE EARL OF BURLINGTON.

How happy you! who varied joys pursue;
And every hour presents you something new!
Plans, schemes, and models, all Palladio's art,
For six long months have gain'd upon your heart;
Of colonnades, of corridors you talk,
The winding staircase and the cover'd walk;
You blend the orders with Vitruvian toil,
And raise with wond'rous joy the fancied pile:
But the dull workman's slow-performing hand
But coldly executes his lord's command.
With dirt and mortar soon you grow displeased,
Planting succeeds, and avenues are raised,
Canals are cut, and mountains level made,
Bow'rs of retreat, and galleries of shade;
The shaven turf presents a lively green;
The bordering flowers in mystic knots are seen:
With studied art on nature you refine—
The spring beheld you warm in this design,
But scarce the cold attacks your fav'rite trees,
Your inclination fails, and wishes freeze:
You quit the grove so lately you admired;
With other views your eager hopes are fired;
Post to the city you direct your way;
Not blooming paradise could bribe your stay:
Ambition shows you power's brightest side,
'T is meanly poor in solitude to hide:
Though certain pains attend the cares of state,
A good man owes his country to be great;
Should act abroad the high distinguish'd part,
Or show at least the purpose of his heart.

With thoughts like these the shining courts you seek,
Full of new projects for almost a week;
You then despise the tinsel-glittering snare,
Think vile mankind below a serious care.
Life is too short for any distant aim;
And cold the dull reward of future fame:
Be happy, then, while yet you have to live;
And love is all the blessing Heav'n can give.
Fired by new passion you address the fair,
Survey the opera as a gay parterre;
Young Chloe's bloom had made you certain prize,
But for a sidelong glance from Celia's eyes:
Your beating heart acknowledges her power;
Your eager eyes her lovely form devour;
You feel the poison swelling in your breast,
And all your soul by fond desire possess'd.
In dying sighs a long three hours are past;
To some assembly with impatient haste,
With trembling hope, and doubtful fear, you move,
Resolved to tempt your fate, and own your love:
But there Belinda meets you on the stairs,
Easy her shape, attracting all her airs;
A smile she gives, and with a smile can wound;
Her melting voice has music in the sound;
Her every motion wears resistless grace;
Wit in her mien, and pleasure in her face:
Here while you vow eternity of love,
Chloe and Celia unregarded move.
Thus on the sands of Afric's burning plains,
However deeply made, no long impress remains;
The slightest leaf can leave its figure there;
The strongest form is scatter'd by the air.
So yielding the warm temper of your mind,
So touch'd by every eye, so toss'd by wind;
Oh! how unlike the Heav'n my soul design'd!
Unseen, unheard, the throng around me move;
Not wishing praise, insensible of love;
No whispers soften, nor no beauties fire;
Careless I see the dance, and coldly hear the lyre.
So num'rous herds are driv'n o'er the rock;
No print is left of all the passing flock;
So sings the wind around the solid stone;
So vainly beat the waves with fruitless moan.
Tedious the toil, and great the workman's care,
Who dares attempt to fix impressions there:

But should some swain, more skilful than the rest,
Engrave his name upon this marble breast,
Not rolling ages could deface that name;
Through all the storms of life 't is still the same:
Though length of years with moss may shade the ground,
Deep, though unseen, remains the secret wound.

VERSES (1)

ADRESSED TO THE IMITATOR OF THE FIRST SATIRE OF THE SECOND BOOK OF HORACE.

In two large columns on thy motley page,
Where Roman wit is striped with English rage;
Where ribaldry to satire makes pretence,
And modern scandal rolls with ancient sense:
Whilst on one side we see how Horace thought,
And on the other how he never wrote;
Who can believe, who view the bad, the good,
That the dull copyist better understood
That spirit he pretends to imitate,
Than heretofore that Greek he did translate?
Thine is just such an image of *his* pen,
As thou thyself art of the sons of men,
Where our own species in burlesque we trace,
A sign-post likeness of the human race,
That is at once resemblance and disgrace.

(1) These verses, although contained in the collection of poems verified by Lady Mary's own hand as written by her, have always been considered the joint composition of Lord Hervey and Lady Mary, and to have been occasioned by some lines, which they supposed to refer to them, in Pope's Imitation of the First Satire of the Second Book of Horace. In the Introductory Anecdotes in vol. i. it is stated, that they "will not be reprinted in this edition;" but, upon farther consideration, the Editor has thought it right to leave them. They have been printed in all the former editions, and he therefore does not think himself warranted in not inserting them in this, however he may disapprove of some parts of them. With regard to those parts, it appears to be only fair to Lady Mary's memory, to remind the reader that the lines in Pope's poem, which she conceived to apply to her, are most gross and unjustifiable; and when the satirist indulges in such attacks, it may be very unwise, but is certainly quite natural, that his victims should retort upon him, in the way they think likely to wound him most severely, if they are capable of doing so with effect, and the reader of these verses will probably be of opinion that the writer or writers of them were not without that power.—W.

Horace can laugh, is delicate, is clear,
You only coarsely rail, or darkly sneer:
His style is elegant, his diction pure,
Whilst none thy crabbed numbers can endure;
Hard as thy heart, and as thy birth obscure.(1)
If *he* has thorns, they all on roses grow;
Thine like thistles, and mean brambles show;
With this exception, that, though rank the soil,
Weeds as they are, they seem produced by toil.
Satire should, like a polish'd razor, keen,
Wound with a touch, that's scarcely felt or seen;
Thine is an oyster-knife, that hacks and hews;
The rage, but not the talent to abuse;
And is in *hate*, what *love* is in the stews.
'T is the gross *lust* of hate that still annoys,
Without distinction, as gross love enjoys:
Neither to folly, nor to vice confined,
The object of thy spleen is humankind;
It preys on all who yield, or who resist;
To thee 't is provocation to exist.
But if thou seest (2) a great and generous heart,
Thy bow is deeply bent to force a dart.
Nor dignity nor innocence is spared,
Nor age, nor sex, nor thrones, nor graves, revered.
Nor only justice vainly we demand,
But even benefits can't rein thy hand;
To this or that alike in vain we trust,
Nor find thee less ungrateful than unjust.
Not even youth and beauty can control
The universal rancour of thy soul;
Charms that might soften superstition's rage,
Might humble pride, or thaw the ice of rage.
But how should'st thou by beauty's force be moved,
No more for loving made than to be loved?

(1) This line ought never to have had a place in a poem written by Lord Hervey and Lady Mary Wortley. They ought to have disdained to taunt Pope upon his origin. This taunt and that upon his figure, a few lines before, are certainly unworthy of them. These reflections, however, seem to have been most keenly felt by Pope; and in the letter to Arbuthnot, which is called the Prologue to the Imitations of Horace, he is at considerable pains to refute that respecting his birth, which makes it probable that that letter was written, in fact, after the Imitations of Horace.—W.

(2) Taste, an Epistle, in which are the reflections upon the Duke of Chandos.

It was the equity of righteous Heav'n,
That such a soul to such a form was giv'n;
And shows the uniformity of fate,
That one so odious should be born to hate.
When God created thee, one would believe
He said the same as to the snake of Eve;
To human race antipathy declare,
'Twixt them and thee be everlasting war.
But oh! the sequel of the sentence dread,
And whilst you *bruise their heel*, beware your head.
Nor think thy weakness shall be thy defence,
The female scold's protection in offence.
Sure 'tis as fair to beat who cannot fight,
As 'tis to libel those who cannot write.
And if thou draw'st thy pen to aid the law,
Others a cudgel, or a rod, may draw.
If none with vengeance yet thy crimes pursue,
Or give thy manifold affronts their due;
If limbs unbroken, skin without a stain,
Unwhipt, unblanketed, unkick'd, unslain,
That wretched little carcase you retain,
The reason is, not that the world wants eyes,
But thou'rt so mean, they see, and they despise:
When fretful *porcupine*, with ranc'rous will,
From mounted back shoots forth a harmless quill,
Cool the spectators stand: and all the while
Upon the angry little monster smile.
Thus 'tis with thee:—while impotently safe,
You strike unwounding, we unhurt can laugh.
Who but must laugh, this bully when he sees,
A puny insect shiv'ring at a breeze?
One over-match'd by every blast of wind,
Insulting and provoking all mankind.
Is this the *thing* to keep mankind in awe,
To make those tremble who escape the law?
Is this *the ridicule* to live so long,
The deathless satire and *immortal song?*
No: like the self-blown praise, thy scandal flies;
And, as we're told of wasps, it stings and dies.
If none do yet return th' intended blow,
You all your safety to your dulness owe:
But whilst that armour thy poor corse defends,
'T will make thy readers few, as are thy friends:
Those who thy nature loathed, yet lov'd thy art,
Who liked thy head, and yet abhorr'd thy heart:

Chose thee to read, but never to converse,
And scorn'd in prose him whom they prized in verse;
Ev'n they shall now their partial error see,
Shall shun thy writings like thy company;
And to thy books shall ope their eyes no more
Than to thy person they would do their door.
Nor thou the justice of the world disown,
That leaves thee thus an outcast and alone;
For though in law to murder be to kill,
In equity the murder's in the will:
Then whilst with coward-hand you stab a name,
And try at least t' assassinate our fame,
Like the first bold assassin's be thy lot,
Ne'er be thy guilt forgiven, or forgot;
But, as thou hat'st, be hated by mankind,
And with the emblem of thy crooked mind
Mark'd on thy back, like Cain by God's own hand,
Wander, like him, accursed through the land.

UNFINISHED SKETCHES
OF A LARGER POEM.

Now, with fresh vigour, morn her light displays,
And the glad birds salute her kindling rays;
The opening buds confess the sun's return,
And rous'd from night all nature seems new-born;
When ponderous Dulness slowly wing'd her way,
And with thick fogs oppos'd the rising day.
Phœbus retir'd as from Thyestes' feasts,
Droop'd all the flow'rs, th' aerial music ceas'd.
Pleas'd with her influence, she exults with pride,
"Shall mortals then escape my power?" she cried:
"Nay, in this town where smoke and mists conspire
To cloud the head, and damp the poet's fire,
Shall Addison my empire here dispute.
So justly founded, lov'd, and absolute?
Explode my children, ribaldry and rhyme,
Rever'd from Chaucer's down to Dryden's time?
Distinguish 't wixt false humour and the true,
And wit make lovely to the vulgar view?
No—better things my destiny ordains,
For Oxford has the wand, and Anna reigns."
She ended, and assum'd Duke Disney's grin,
With broad plump face, pert eyes, and ruddy skin,
Which show'd the stupid joke whch lurk'd within.

In this loved form she knock'd at St. John's(1) gate,
Where crowds already for his levee wait;
And wait they may, those wretches that appear
To talk of service past, and long arrear:
But the proud partner of his pleasure goes
Through crowds of envious eyes and servile bows.
And now approaching where the statesman lay,
To his unwilling eyes reveal'd the day.
Starting, he wak'd, and, waking, swore by God,
"This early visit, friend, is wond'rous odd!
Scarce have I rested two small hours in bed,
And fumes of wine oppress my aching head.
By thee I'm sure my soul is understood
Too well to plague me for the public good.
Let stupid patriots toil to serve the brutes,
And wast the fleeting hours in vain disputes;
The use of power supreme I better know,
Nor will I lose the joys the gods bestow:
The sparkling glass, soft flute and willing fair
Alternate guard me from the shocks of care.
'Tis the prerogative of wit like mine
To emulate in ease the pow'rs divine;
And while I revel, leave the busy fools
To plot like chemists, or to trudge like tools."
"Believe me, lord! (replies his seeming friend)
Some difficulties every state attend.
Cares must surround the men that wealth possess,
And sorrow mingles ev'n with love's success.
Great as you are, no greatness long is sure.
Advancement it but pain if not secure,
All your long schemes may vanish in an hour,
Oh tremble at the sad reverse of pow'r!
How will these slaves that waiting watch your eye
Insulting smile or pass regardless by?
Nor is this thought the creature of my fears,
Approaching ruin now most strong appears.
Men must be dull who passively obey,
And ignorance fixes, arbitrary sway;
Think of this maxim, and no more permit
A dangerous(2) writer to retail his wit.
The consequence of sense is liberty,
And if men think aright, they will be free;

(1) Lord Bolingbroke.

(2) The Spectator was in course of publication at that time. This is an allusion to it.

Encourage you the poet(1) I shall bring,
Your Granville he already tries to sing;
Nor think, my lord, I only recommend
An able author, but an useful friend;
In verse his phlegm, in puns he shows his fire,
And skill'd in pimping to your heart's desire."
"I thank thee, duke (replies the drowsy peer),
But cannot listen to thy childish fear.
This Addison, 'tis true, debauch'd in schools,
Will sometimes oddly talk of musty rules.
Yet here and there I see a master line,
I feel and I confess the power divine.
In spite of interest charm'd into applause,
I wish for such a champion in our cause:
Nor shall your reasons force me to submit
To patronise a bard of meaner wit;
Men can but say wit did my judgment blind,
And wit 's the noblest frailty of the mind."
The disappointed goddess, swell'd with spite,
Dropping her borrow'd form, appears in open light.
So the sly nymph in masquerade disguise,
The faith of her suspected lover tries;
But when the perjury too plain appears,
Her eyes are fill'd with mingled rage and tears;
No more remembers the affected tone,
Sinks the feign'd voice, and thunders in her own.
"How hast thou dared my party then to quit,
Or dost thou, wretch, presume thou art a wit?
Read thy own works, consider well each line,
In each dull page, how palpably I shine!
'T is I that to thy eloquence affords
Such empty thoughts wrapt in superfluous words;
To me alone your pamphlet–praise you owe.
'Tis I your tropes and florid sense bestow;
After such wreaths bestow'd, such service done,
Dare you refuse protection to my son?
The time shall come, though now at court ador'd,
When still a writer, though no more a lord,
On common stalls thy darling works be spread,
And thou shalt answer them to make them read."
She said, and turning show'd her wrinkled neck,
In scales and colour like a roach's back.

(1) Pope.

THE COURT OF DULNESS.

A FRAGMENT.

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HER palace plac'd beneath a muddy road,
And such the influence of the dull abode,
The carrier's horse above can scarcely drag his load.
Here chose the goddess her belov'd retreat, (1)
Which Phœbus tries in vain to penetrate;
Adorn'd within with shells of small expense,
(Emblems of tinsel rhyme and trifling sense,)
Perpetual fogs enclose the sacred cave,
The neighbouring sinks their fragrant odours gave;
In contemplation here she pass'd her hours,
Closely attended by subservient powers:
Bold profanation with a brazen brow,—
Much to this great ally does Dulness owe:
But still more near the goddess you attend,
Naked Obscenity! her darling friend.
To thee for shelter all the dull still fly,
Pert double meanings e'en at school we try,
What numerous writers owe their praise to thee,
No sex—no age—is from thy influence free;
By thee how bright appears the senseless song,
By thee the book is sold, the lines are strong.
The heaviest poet, by thy powerful aid,
Warms the brisk youth and charms the sprightly maid;
Where breathes the mortal who 's not prov'd thy force
In well-bred pun, or waiting-room discourse?
Such were the chiefs who form'd her gloomy court,
Her pride, her ornament, and her support:
Behind attended such a numerous crowd
Of quibbles strain'd, old rhymes, and laughter loud,
Throngs that might even make a goddess proud.
Yet pensive thoughts lay brooding in her breast,
And fear, the mate of power, her mind oppress'd.
Oft she revolv'd—for oh, too well she knew
What Merlin sung, and part long since prov'd true,
" When Harry's brows the diadem adorn,
From Reformation Learning shall be born;
Slowly in strength the infant shall improve,
The parent's glory and its country's love:

(1) Alluding to Pope's grotto at Twickenham.

Free from the thraldom of monastic rhymes,
In bright progression bless succeeding times;
Milton free poesy from the monkish chain,
And Addison that Milton shall explain;
Point out the beauties of each living page;
Reform the taste of a degen'rate age;
Show that true wit disdains all little art,
And can at once engage and mend the heart;
Knows even popular applause to gain,
Yet not malicious, wanton, or profane."
This prophecy perplex'd her anxious head;
And, yawning thrice, thus to her sons she said:
"When such an author honour'd shall appear,
'T is plain, the hour of our destruction's near!
And public rumour now aloud proclaims
At universal monarchy he aims.
What to this hero, whom shall we oppose?
A strong confederacy of stupid foes—
Such brave allies as are by nature fit
To check the progress of o'erflowing wit;
Where envy and where impudence are join'd
To contradict the voice of humankind.
At Dacier's ignorance shall gravely smile,
And blame the coarseness of Spectator's style;
Shall swear that Tickell understands not Greek,
That Addison can't write, nor Walpole speak."
Fir'd by this project Profanation rose—
"One leader, Goddess, let me here propose;
In a near realm, which owns thy gentle sway,
My darling son now chaunts his pleasing lay.
Trampling on order, decency, and laws,
And vaunts himself the champion of my cause.
Him will I bring to teach the callow youth
To scorn dry morals—laugh at sacred truth.
All fears of future reckonings he shall quench,
And bid them bravely drink and freely wench.
By his example much, by precept more,
They learn 't is wit to swear, and safe to wh--re.

* * * * *

Mocks Newton's schemes, and Tillotson's discourse,
And imitates the virtues of a horse.
With this design to add to his renown.
He wears the rev'rend dress of band and gown."(1)

(1) This character is drawn for Dr. Swift.

The Goddess, pleased, bestow'd a gracious grin,
When thus does fair Obscenity begin:
"My humbler subjects are not plac'd so high,
They joke in kitchens, and in cellars ply;
Yet one I have, bred in those worthy schools,
Admired by shoals of male and female fools;
In ballads what I dictate he shall sing,
And troops of converts to my banners bring.
Bold in my cause, and most profanely dull,
With smooth unmeaning rhymes the town shall lull;
Shall sing of worms in great Arbuthnot's strain,
In lewd burlesque the sacred Psalms profane;
To maids of honour songs obscene address,
Nor need we doubt his wonderful success.
Long have I watch'd this genius yet unknown,
Inspir'd his rhyme, and mark'd him for my own;
His early youth in superstition bred,
And monkish legends all the books he read.
Tinctur'd by these, proceeds his love of rhyme,
Milton he scorns, but Crambo thinks divine.
And oh! 'tis sure (our foes confess this truth)
The old Cambronians yield to this stupendous youth.
But present want obscures the poet's name,
Be it my charge to talk him into fame.
My Lansdowne (whose love songs so smoothly run,
My darling author, and my fav'rite son)
He shall protect the man (1) whom I inspire,
And Windsor-forest openly admire;
And Bolingbroke with flattery shall bribe,
'Till the charm'd lord most nobly shall subscribe;
And hostile Addison too late shall find,
'Tis easier to corrupt than mend mankind.
The town, which now revolts, once more obey,
And the whole island own my pristine sway!"
She said, and slowly leaves the realm of night,
While the cursed phantoms praise her droning flight.

AN EPISTLE FROM POPE TO LORD BOLINGBROKE.

CONFESS, dear Lælius! (2) pious, just, and wise,
Some self-content does in that bosom rise,

(1) Mr. Pope.

(2) Pope first addressed his Essay on Man to Lord Bolingbroke, as Lælius.

When you reflect, as sure you sometimes must,
What talents Heaven does to thy virtue trust,
While with contempt you view poor humankind,
Weak, wilful, sensual, passionate, and blind.
Amid these errors thou art faultless found,
(The moon takes lustre from the darkness round,)
Permit me too, a small attendant star,
To twinkle, though in a more distant sphere;
Small things with great, we poets oft compare.
With admiration all your steps I view,
And almost envy what I can't pursue.
The world must grant (and 'tis no common fame)
My courage and my probity the same.
But you, great Lord, to nobler scenes were born;
Your early youth did Anna's court adorn.
Let Oxford own, let Catalonia tell,
What various victims to your wisdom fell;
Let vows or benefits the vulgar bind,
Such ties can never chain th' intrepid mind.
Recorded be that memorable hour,
When, to elude exasperated pow'r,
With blushless front, you durst your friend betray,
Advise the whole confed'racy to stay,
While with sly courage you run brisk away.
By a deserted court with joy received,
Your projects all admir'd, your oaths believed;
Some trust obtain'd, of which good use he made,
To gain a pardon where you first betray'd.
But what is pardon to th' aspiring breast?
You should have been first minister at least:
Failing of that, forsaken and depress'd,
Sure any soul but your's had sought for rest!
And mourn'd in shades, far from the public eye,
Successless fraud, and useless infamy.
And here, my lord! let all mankind admire
The efforts bold of unexhausted fire;
You stand the champion of the people's cause,
And bid the mob reform defective laws.
Oh! was your pow'r, like your intention good,
Your native land would stream with civic blood.
I own these glorious schemes I view with pain;
My little mischiefs to myself seem mean.
Such ills are humble though my heart is great,
All I can do is flatter, lie, and cheat;

Yet I may say 'tis plain that you preside
O'er all my morals, and 't is much my pride
To tread with steps unequal where you guide.
My first subscribers (1) I have first defam'd,
And when detected, never was asham'd;
Rais'd all the storms I could in private life,
Whisper'd the husband to reform the wife;
Outwitted Lintot in his very trade,
And charity with obloquy repaid.
Yet while you preach in prose, I scold in rhymes,
Against th' injustice of flagitious times.
You, learned doctor of the public stage,
Give gilded poison to corrupt the age;
Your poor toad-eater I, around me scatter
My scurril jests, and gaping crowds bespatter.
This may seem envy to the formal fools
Who talk of virtue's bounds and honour's rules;
We, who with piercing eyes look nature through,
We know that all is right in all we do.
Reason 's erroneous—honest instinct right—
Monkeys were made to grin, and fleas to bite.
Using the spite by the Creator given,
We only tread the path that 's mark'd by Heaven.
And sure with justice 't is that we exclaim,
Such wrongs must e'en your modesty inflame;
While blockheads court–rewards and honours share,
You, poet, patriot, and philosopher,
No bills in pocket, nor no garter wear.
When I see smoking on a booby's board
Fat ortolans and pye of Perigord,
Myself am mov'd to high poetic rage
(The Homer and the Horace of the age,)
Puppies who have the insolence to dine
With smiling beauties, and with sparkling wine;
While I retire, plagu'd with an empty purse,
Eat brocoli, and kiss my ancient nurse. (2)
But had we flourish'd when stern Harry reign'd,
Our good designs had been but ill explain'd;
The axe had cut your solid reas'nings short,
I, in the porter's lodge, been scourged at court.

(1) To the Translation of Homer.

(2) To whom Pope erected a tomb, which he inscribed to her memory, in the churchyard at Twickenham.

To better times kind Heav'n reserv'd our birth.
Happy for you such coxcombs are on earth!
Mean spirits seek their villany to hide;
We show our venom'd souls with nobler pride,
And in bold strokes have all mankind defy'd,
Pass'd o'er the bounds that keep mankind in awe,
And laugh'd at justice, liberty, and law.
While our admirers stare with dumb surprise.
Treason and scandal we monopolise.
Yet this remains our more peculiar boast,
You 'scape the block, and I the whipping-post.

LADY HERTFORD,

TO LORD WILLIAM HAMILTON.

DEAR Colin, prevent my warm blushes,
Since how can I speak without pain?
My eyes oft have told you my wishes,
Why don't you their meaning explain?

My passion will lose by expression,
And you may too cruelly blame;
Then do not expect a confession
Of what is too tender to name.

Since yours is the province of speaking,
How can you then hope it from me?
Our wishes should be in our keeping,
'Till yours tell us what they should be.

Alas! then, why don't you discover?
Did your heart feel such torments as mine,
Eyes need not tell over and over,
What I in my breast would confine.

ANSWERED, FOR LORD WILLIAM HAMILTON,

BY LADY M. W. MONTAGU.

GOOD Madam, when ladies are willing,
A man must needs look like a fool;
For me, I would not give a shilling
For one who would love out of rule,

You should leave us to guess by your blushing,
And not speak the matter so plain;
'T is ours to write and be pushing,
'T is yours to affect a disdain.

That you are in a terrible taking,
By all these sweet oglings I see;
But the fruit that can fall without shaking,
Indeed is too mellow for me.

EPISTLE FROM ARTHUR GREY, THE FOOTMAN. (1)

TO MRS. MURRAY,

After his Condemnation for attempting to commit Violence.

READ, lovely nymph, and tremble not to read,
I have no more to wish, nor you to dread;
I ask not life, for life to me were vain,
And death a refuge from severer pain.
My only hope in these last lines I try—
I would be pitied, and I then would die.
Long had I liv'd as sordid as my fate,
Nor curs'd the destiny that made me wait
A servile slave: content with homely food,
The gross instinct of happiness pursu'd:
Youth gave me sleep at night and warmth of blood.
Ambition yet had never touch'd my breast;
My lordly master knew no sounder rest;
With labour healthy, in obedience blest.
But when I saw—oh! had I never seen
That wounding softness, that engaging mien!
The mist of wretched education flies,
Shame, fear, desire, despair, and love arise,
The new creation of those beauteous eyes.
But yet that love pursu'd no guilty aim;
Deep in my heart I hid the secret flame:
I never hoped my fond desire to tell,
And all my wishes were to serve you well.
Heav'ns! how I flew, when wing'd by your command,
And kiss'd the letters giv'n me by your hand.

(1) This man was tried for the offence in 1721. As the lady had wrested the pistol from his hand, and alarmed the family, he was convicted only of burglary, and transported. In Dallaway's edition, this poem is addressed to "Mrs. Mahoney." Now it is quite clear, that the person meant is "Mrs. Murray," and if the reader will turn to the introductory anecdotes, vol. i, p. 68, he will there find the story which gave rise to it. It appears to have given offence to that lady, which was increased by another publication, a ballad, of which, however, Lady Mary always positively denied having been the author.—W.

How pleased, how proud, how fond was I to wait,
Present the sparkling wine, or change the plate!
How, when you sung, my soul devour'd the sound,
And ev'ry sense was in the rapture drown'd!
Though bid to go, I quite forgot to move;
—You knew not that stupidity was love!
But oh! the torment not to be express'd,
The grief, the rage, the hell, that fired this breast,
When my great rivals, in embroid'ry gay,
Sate by your side, or led you from the play!
I still contrived near as I could to stand,
(The flambeau trembling in my shaking hand;)
I saw, or thought I saw, those fingers press'd,
For thus their passion by my own I guess'd,
And jealous fury all my soul possess'd.
Like torrents, love and indignation meet,
And madness would have thrown me at your feet.
Turn, lovely nymph (for so I would have said),
Turn from those triflers who make love a trade;
This is true passion in my eyes you see;
They cannot, no—they cannot love like me;
Frequent debauch has pall'd their sickly taste,
Faint their desire, and in a moment past:
They sigh not from the heart, but from the brain;
Vapours of vanity and strong champaign.
Too dull to feel what forms like yours inspire,
After long talking of their painted fire,
To some lewd brothel they at night retire;
There, pleased with fancy'd quality and charms,
Enjoy your beauties in a strumpet's arms.
Such are the joys those toasters have in view,
And such the wit and pleasure they pursue;
—And is this love that ought to merit you?
Each opera night a new address begun,
They swear to thousands what they swear to one.
Not thus I sigh—but all my sighs are vain—
Die, wretched Arthur, and conceal thy pain:
'T is impudence to wish, and madness to complain.
Fix'd on this view, my only hope of ease,
I waited not the aid of slow disease;
The keenest instruments of death I sought,
And death alone employ'd my lab'ring thought.
This all the night—when I remember well
The charming tinkle of your morning bell!

Fir'd by the sound, I hastened with your tea,
With one last look to smooth the darksome way—
But oh! how dear that fatal look has cost!
In that fond moment my resolves were lost.
Hence all my guilt, and all your sorrows rise—
I saw the languid softness of your eyes;
I saw the dear disorder of your bed;
Your cheeks all glowing with a tempting red;
Your night-clothes tumbled with resistless grace,
Your flowing hair play'd careless down your face;
Your night-gown fasten'd with a single pin;
—Fancy improv'd the wondrous charms within!
I fix'd my eyes upon that heaving breast,
And hardly, hardly, I forbore the rest:
Eager to gaze, unsatisfied with sight,
My head grew giddy with the near delight!
—Too well you know the fatal following night!
Th' extremest proof of my desire I give,
And since you will not love, I will not live.
Condemn'd by you, I wait the righteous doom,
Careless and fearless of the woes to come.
But when you see me waver in the wind,
My guilty flame extinct, my soul resign'd,
Sure you may pity what you can't approve,
The cruel consequence of furious love.
Think the bold wretch, that could so greatly dare,
Was tender, faithful, ardent, and sincere;
Think when I held the pistol to your breast,—
Had I been of the world's large rule possess'd,—
That world had then been yours, and I been blest;
Think that my life was quite below my care,
Nor fear'd I any hell beyond despair.—
If these reflections, though they seize you late,
Give some compassion for your Arthur's fate:
Enough you give, nor ought I to complain;
You pay my pangs, nor have I died in vain.

THE FOURTH ODE OF THE FIRST BOOK OF HORACE IMITATED.

"Solvitur acris hyems gratâ vice veris," etc.

SHARP winter now dissolv'd, the linnets sing,
The grateful breath of pleasing Zephyrs bring
The welcome joys of long desired spring.

The gallies now for open sea prepare,
The herds forsake their stalls for balmy air,
The fields adorn'd with green th' approaching sun declare.
In shining nights the charming Venus leads
Her troop of Graces, and her lovely maids,
Who gaily trip the ground in myrtle shades.
The blazing forge her husband Vulcan heats,
And thunderlike the labouring hammer beats,
While toiling Cyclops every stroke repeats.
Of myrtle new the cheerful wreath compose,
Or various flowers which opening spring bestows,
Till coming June presents the blushing rose.
Pay your vow'd offering to God Faunus' bower!
Then, happy Sestius, seize the present hour,
'Tis all that nature leaves to mortal power.
The equal hand of strong impartial Fate
Levels the peasant and th' imperious great,
Nor will that doom on human projects wait.
To the dark mansions of the senseless dead,
With daily steps our destined path we tread,
Realms still unknown, of which so much is said.
Ended your schemes of pleasure and of pride,
In joyous feasts no one will there preside,
Torn from your Lycidas' beloved side;
Whose tender youth does now our eyes engage,
And soon will give, in his maturer age,
Sighs to our virgins—to our matrons rage.

THE FIFTH ODE OF THE FIRST BOOK OF HORACE IMITATED.

"Quis multâ gracilis te puer in rosâ."

For whom are now your airs put on,
And what new beautys doom'd to be undone?
That careless elegance of dress,
This essence that perfumes the wind,
Your ev'ry motion does confess
Some secret conquest is design'd.
Alas! the poor unhappy maid,
To what a train of ills betray'd!
What fears, what pangs shall rend her breast,
How will her eyes dissolve in tears!
That now with glowing joy is bless'd,
Charm'd with the faithless vows she hears.

So the young sailor on the summer sea
Gaily pursues his destined way:
Fearless and careless on the deck he stands,
Till sudden storms arise and thunders roll;
In vain he casts his eyes to distant lands,
Distracting terror tears his timorous soul.
For me, secure I view the raging main,
Past are my dangers, and forgot my pain:
My votive tablet in the temple shows
The monument of folly past;
I paid the bounteous god my grateful vows,
Who snatch'd from ruin, sav'd me at the last.

THE LOVER: A BALLAD.

TO MR. CONGREVE.

At length, by so much importunity press'd,
Take, Congreve, at once the inside of my breast.
This stupid indiff'rence so often you blame,
Is not owing to nature, to fear, or to shame:
I am not as cold as a virgin in lead,
Nor are Sunday's sermons so strong in my head:
I know but too well how time flies along,
That we live but few years, and yet fewer are young.

But I hate to be cheated, and never will buy
Long years of repentance for moments of joy.
Oh! was there a man (but where shall I find
Good sense and good-nature so equally join'd?)
Would value his pleasure, contribute to mine;
Not meanly would boast, nor lewdly design;
Not over severe, yet not stupidly vain,
For I would have the power, though not give the pain.

No pedant, yet learned; no rake-helly gay,
Or laughing, because he has nothing to say;
To all my whole sex obliging and free,
Yet never be fond of any but me;
In public preserve the decorum that 's just,
And show in his eyes he is true to his trust!
Then rarely approach, and respectfully bow,
But not fulsomely pert, nor yet foppishly low.

But when the long hours of public are past,
And we meet with champaign and a chicken at last,

May every fond pleasure that moment endear;
Be banish'd afar both discretion and fear!
Forgetting or scorning the airs of the crowd,
He may cease to be formal, and I to be proud,
Till lost in the joy, we confess that we live,
And he may be rude, and yet I may forgive.

And that my delight may be solidly fix'd,
Let the friend and the lover be handsomely mix'd;
In whose tender bosom my soul may confide,
Whose kindness can soothe me, whose counsel can guide.
From such a dear lover as here I describe,
No danger should fright me, no millions should bribe;
But till this astonishing creature I know,
As I long have liv'd chaste, I will keep myself so.

I never will share with the wanton coquette,
Or be caught by a vain affectation of wit.
The toasters and songsters may try all their art,
But never shall enter the pass of my heart.
I loathe the lewd rake, the dress'd fopling despise:
Before such pursuers the nice virgin flies;
And as Ovid has sweetly in parable told,
We harden like trees, and like rivers grow cold.

ON SEEING, A PORTRAIT OF SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.

Such were the lively eyes and rosy hue
Of Robin's face, when Robin first I knew;
The gay companion and the favourite guest;
Loved without awe, and without views caress'd;
His cheerful smile, and open honest look,
Added new graces to the truth he spoke.
Then every man found something to commend,
The pleasant neighbour and the worthy friend;
The generous master of a private house,
The tender father and indulgent spouse.
The hardest censors at the worst believed,
His temper was too easily deceived
(A consequential ill good-nature draws,
A bad effect, but from a noble cause).
Whence then these clamours of a judging crowd?
Suspicious, griping, insolent, and proud—
Rapacious, cruel, violent, unjust;
False to his friend, and traitor to his trust?

AN ELEGY ON MRS. THOMPSON. (1)

UNHAPPY fair, by fatal love betray'd!
Must then thy beauties thus untimely fade!
And all thy blooming, soft, inspiring charms,
Become a prey to Death's destructive arms!
Though short thy day, and transient like the wind,
How far more blest than those yet left behind!
Safe in the grave thy griefs with thee remain;
And life's tempestuous billows break in vain.
Ye tender nymphs in lawless pastimes gay,
Who heedless down the paths of pleasure stray;
Though long secure, with blissful joy elate,
Yet pause, and think of Arabella's fate;
For such may be your unexpected doom,
And your next pleasures lull you in the tomb.
But let it be the muse's gentle care
To shield from envy's rage the mould'ring fair;
To draw a veil o'er faults she can't defend;
And what prudes have devour'd, leave time to end:
Be it her part to drop a pitying tear,
And mourning sigh around thy sable bier,
Nor shall thy woes long glad th' ill-natured crowd,
Silent to praise, and in detraction loud:
When scandal, that through life each worth destroys,
And malice that embitters all our joys,
Shall in some ill-starr'd wretch find later stains,
And let thine rest, forgot as thy remains.

ON THE DEATH OF MRS. BOWES. (2)

Written extempore on a card, in a large company, December 14, 1724,

HAIL, happy bride, for thou art truly blest!
Three months of rapture, crown'd with endless rest.
Merit like yours was Heav'n's peculiar care,
You loved—yet tasted happiness sincere.

(1) Arabella, the wife of Edward Thompson, Esq. one of tho daughters and coheirs of Edmund Dunch, Esq. The others were the Duchess of Manchester and Lady Oxenden.

(2) Eleanor, the daughter of the Honourable Thomas Verney, eldest son of George, Lord Willoughby de Broke, married George Bowes, Esq., of Streatlam, in the County of Durham, 1st October 1724, and died 4th December, in the same year.

To you the sweets of love were only shown,
The sure succeeding bitter dregs unknown;
You had not yet the fatal change deplored,
The tender lover for th' imperious lord:
Nor felt the pain that jealous fondness brings:
Nor felt, that coldness from possession springs.
Above your sex, distinguish'd in your fate,
You trusted—yet experienced no deceit;
Soft were your hours, and wing'd with pleasure flew;
No vain repentance gave a sigh to you:
And if superior bliss Heaven can bestow,
With fellow-angels you enjoy it now.

A MAN IN LOVE.

"L'Homme qui ne se trouve point, et ne se trouvera jamais."

The man who feels the dear disease,
Forgets himself, neglects to please,
The crowd avoids, and seeks the groves,
And much he thinks when much he loves;
Press'd with alternate hope and fear,
Sighs in her absence, sighs when near.
The gay, the fond, the fair, the young,
Those trifles pass unseen along,
To him a pert insipid throng.
But most he shuns the vain coquette;
Contemns her false affected wit:
The minstrel's sound, the flowing bowl,
Oppress and hurt the amorous soul.
'Tis solitude alone can please,
And give some intervals of ease.
He feeds the soft distemper there,
And fondly courts the distant fair;
To balls the silent shade prefers,
And hates all other charms but hers.
When thus your absent swains can do,
Molly, you may believe him true.

A BALLAD.

To the Tune of "The Irish Howl."

To that dear nymph, whose pow'rful name
Does every throbbing nerve inflame
(As the soft sound I low repeat
My pulse unequal measures beat),

Whose eyes I never more shall see,
That once so sweetly shined on thee;
Go, gentle wind! and kindly bear
My tender wishes to the fair.
Hoh, ho, ho, etc.

Amidst her pleasures let her know
The secret anguish of my woe,
The midnight pang, the jealous hell,
Does in this tortur'd bosom dwell:
While laughing she, and full of play,
Is with her young companions gay;
Or hearing in some fragrant bower
Her lover's sigh, and beauty's power.
Hoh, ho, ho, etc.

Lost and forgotten may I be!
Oh may no pitying thought of me
Disturb the joy that she may find,
When love is crown'd and fortune kind:
May that bless'd swain (whom yet I hate)
Be proud of his distinguish'd fate:
Each happy night be like the first;
And he be bless'd as I am cursed.
Hoh, ho, ho, etc.

While in these pathless woods I stray,
And lose my solitary way;
Talk to the stars, to trees complain,
And tell the senseless woods my pain:
But madness spares the sacred name,
Nor dares the hidden wound proclaim;
Which, secret rankling, sure and slow,
Shall close in endless peace my woe.
Hoh, ho, ho, etc.

When this fond heart shall ache no more,
And all the ills of life are o'er
(If gods by lovers' prayers are moved,
As ev'ry god in heaven has loved);
Instead of bright Elysian joys,
That unknown something in the skies,
In recompense of all my pain,
The only heaven I 'd obtain,
May I, the guardian of her charms,
Preserve that paradise from harms.
Hoh, ho, ho, etc.

A HYMN TO THE MOON.

Written in July, in an arbour.

THOU silver deity of secret night,
Direct my footsteps through the woodland shade;
Thou conscious witness of unknown delight,
The Lover's guardian, and the Muse's aid!

By thy pale beams I solitary rove,
To thee my tender grief confide;
Serenely sweet you gild the silent grove,
My friends, my goddess, and my guide.

E'en thee, fair queen, from thy amazing height,
The charms of young Endymion drew;
Veil'd with the mantle of concealing night;
With all thy greatness and thy coldness too.(1)

TRANSLATED BY HERSELF.

DELLA notte serena argentea Diva,
Testimon' fido de' piaceri ignoti:
Custode degli amanti e delle Muse
Fautrice, reggi me ne' boschi oscuri.
Da' tuoi pallidi rai scorto io camino
Su la terra, ed a te svelo i più cupi
Pensieri. Ah indora il tacitorno bosco,
Dolcemente serena amica mia,
E mia guida, e mia Dea. Bella reina,
Te dalla tua prodigiosa altezza
Il lusinghiero Endimione attrasse,
Del velo ingombra della notte oscura,
Della tua ampiezza in onta e del tuo gelo.

THE BRIDE IN THE COUNTRY.

A Parody on Rowe's Balld, "Despairing beside a clear Stream," etc.

By the side of a half-rotten wood
Melantha sat silently down,
Convinced that her scheme was not good,
And vex'd to be absent from Town.

(1) This sonnet is preserved by Count Algarotti in the seventh volume of his works, and is there mentioned with great commendation.

Whilst pitied by no living soul,
To herself she was forced to reply,
And the sparrow, as grave as an owl,
Sat list'ning and pecking hard by.

"Alas! silly maid that I was;"
Thus sadly complaining, she cry'd;
"When first I forsook that dear place,
'T had been better by far I had died!
How gaily I pass'd the long days,
In a round of continued delights;
Park, visits, assemblies, and plays,
And a dance to enliven the nights.

"How simple was I to believe
Delusive poetical dreams!
Or the flattering landscapes they give
Of meadows and murmuring streams.
Bleak mountains, and cold starving rocks,
Are the wretched result of my pains;
The swains greater brutes than their flocks,
The nymphs as polite as the swains.

"What though I have got my dear Phil;
I see him all night and all day;
I find I must not have my will,
And I've cursedly sworn to obey!
Fond damsel, thy power is lost,
As now I experience too late!
Whatever a lover may boast,
A husband is what one may hate!

"And thou, my old woman, so dear,
My all that is left of relief,
Whatever I suffer, forbear—
Forbear to dissuade me from grief:
'T is in vain, as you say, to repine
At ills which cannot be redress'd;
But, in sorrows so poignant as mine,
To be patient, alas! is a jest.

"If, farther to soothe my distress,
Your tender compassion is led,
Come hither and help to undress,
And decently put me to bed.
The last humble solace I wait,
Would Heav'n but indulge me the boon,

May some dream, less unkind than my fate,
In a vision transport me to Town.

"Clarissa, meantime, weds a beau,
Who decks her in golden array;
She 's the finest at ev'ry fine show,
And flaunts it at Park and at Play:
Whilst I am here left in the lurch,
Forgot and secluded from view;
Unless when some bumpkin at church
Stares wistfully over the pew."

The following is another version of the preceding poem, as it was set to music, and called

MELINDA'S COMPLAINT.

By the side of a glimmering fire,
Melinda sat pensively down,
Impatient of rural esquire,
And vex'd to be absent from Town.
The cricket, from under the grate,
With a chirp to her sighs did reply;
And the kitten, as grave as a cat,
Sat mournfully purring hard by.

"Alas! silly maid that I was,"
Thus sadly complaining, she cry'd;
"When first I forsook that dear place,
'T were better by far I had died:
How gaily I pass'd the long day,
In a round of continu'd delight;
Park, visits, assemblies, and play,
And quadrille to enliven the night.

"How simple was I to believe
Delusive poetical dreams!
The flattering landskips they give
Of groves, meads, and murmuring streams.
Bleak mountains, and wild staring rocks,
Are the wretched result of my pains;
The swains greater brutes than their flocks.
And the nymphs as polite as the swains.

"What though I have skill to ensnare,
Where Smarts in bright circles abound;
What tho' at St. James's at prayers,
Beaux ogle devoutly around:

Fond virgin, thy power is lost
  On a race of rude Hottentot brutes;
What glory in being the toast
  Of noisy dull 'squires in boots?

"And thou, my companion, so dear,
  My all that is left of relief,
Whatever I suffer, forbear—
  Forbear to dissuade me from grief:
'Tis in vain then, you 'll say, to repine
  At ills which cannot be redressed,
But in sorrows so pungent as mine,
  To be patient, alas! is a test.

"If, farther to soothe my distress,
  Thy tender compassion is led,
Call Jenny to help me undress,
  And decently put me to bed.
The last humble solace I wait,
  Would Heaven indulge me the boon,
Some dream less unkind than my fate
  In a vision transport me to Town.

"Clarissa, meantime, weds a beau,
  Who decks her in golden array;
The finest at every fine show,
  And flaunts it at Park and at Play;
Whilst here we are left in the lurch,
  Forgot and secluded from view,
Unless when some bumpkin at church
  Stares wistfully over the pew."

SONG.

WHY should you think I live unpleased,
  Because I am not pleased with you
My mind is not so far diseased,
  To yield when powder'd fops pursue.

My vanity can find no charm
  In common prostituted vows;
Nor can you raise a wish that 's warm
  In one that your true value knows.

While cold and careless thus I shun
  The buzz and flutter that you make,
Perhaps some giddy girl may run
  To catch the prize that I forsake.

So brightly shines the glittering glare,
In unexperienced children's eyes,
When they with little arts ensnare
The gaudy painted butterflies.

While they with pride the conquest boast,
And think the chase deserving care,
Those scorn the useless toil they cost
Who 're used to more substantial fare.

SONG—RONDEAU.

FINISH these langours! Oh! I 'm sick,
Of dying airs I know the trick;
Long since I 've learn'd to well explain
Th' unmeaning cant of fire and pain,
And see through all the senseless lies
Of burning darts from killing eyes
I 'm tir'd with this continual rout
Of bowing low, and leading out.
Finish, etc.

Finish this tedious dangling trade,
By which so many fools are made;
For fools they are, whom you can please
By such affected airs as these:
At opera near my box to stand,
And slyly press the given hand,
Thus may you wait whole years in vain;
But sure you would, were you in pain.
Finish, etc.

EPITHALAMIUM.

SINCE you, Mr. H**d, will marry black Kate,
Accept of good wishes for that blessed state:
May you fight all the day like a dog and a cat.
And yet ev'ry year produce a new brat.
Fal la!

May she never be honest—you never be sound;
May her tongue like a clapper be heard a mile round;
Till abandon'd by joy, and deserted by grace.
You hang yourselves both in the very same place.
Fal la!

THE NINTH ODE OF THE THIRD BOOK OF HORACE IMITATED.

1736.

"Donec gratus eram tibi."

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.

WHILST in each of my schemes you most heartily join'd,
And help'd the worst jobs that I ever design'd,
In pamphlets, in ballads, in senate, at table,
Thy satire was witty, thy counsel was able.

WILLIAM PULTENEY.

Whilst with me you divided both profit and care,
And the plunder and glory did equally share;
Assur'd of his place, if my fat friend should die,
The Prince of Wales was not so happy as I.

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.

Harry Pelham is now my support and delight,
Whom we bubble all day, and we joke on at night;
His head is well furnish'd, his lungs have their merit,
I would venture a rope to advance such a spirit.

WILLIAM PULTENEY.

I too have a Harry more useful than yours,
Writes verses like mad, and will talk you whole hours;
I would bleed by the hatchet, or swing by the cord,
To see him once more in his robes, like a lord.

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.

But what if this quarrel was kindly made up,
Would you, my dear Willy, accept of a sup?
If the queen should confess you had long been her choice,
And you knew it was I who had spoke in her voice?

WILLIAM PULTENEY.

Though my Harry 's so gay, so polite, and so civil,
You rude as a bear, and more proud than the devil,
I gladly would drop him, and laugh in your ear
At the fools we have made for this last dozen year.

A SUMMARY

OF LORD LYTTLETON'S ADVICE TO A LADY.

"The counsels of a friend, Belinda, hear," etc.

BE plain in dress, and sober in your diet,
In short, my deary, kiss me! and be quiet.

SONG.

WHY will Delia thus retire,
And languish life away?
While the sighing crows admire,
'Tis too soon for hartshorn tea.

All these dismal looks and fretting
Cannot Damon's life restore;
Long ago the worms have eat him,
You can never see him more.

Once again consult your toilet,
In the glass your face review;
So much weeping sure will spoil it,
And no spring your charms renew.

I, like you, was born a woman,
Well I know what vapours mean!
The disease, alas! is common,
Single we have all the spleen.

All the morals that they teach us
Never cured sorrow yet:
Choose among the pretty fellows
One of humour, youth, and wit.

Prithee hear him ev'ry morning,
At the least an hour or two;
Once again at night returning,
I believe the dose will do.

THE SAME.

TRANSLATED BY LADY M. W. MONTAGU.

Recipe per l'Excellentissima Signora Chiara Michelli.

VI consigliate con lo specchio, e il vostro
Viso mirate—lagrime cotante
Lo guasteranno, ed i perduti vezzi
Non avranno altra primavera. Jo nacqiu,

Donna, qual voi, e so qual voi la forza
Che hanno i vapori e infirmità commune;
Tutte abbiam mal di milza, e non sanaro
Delle moral le massime più saggi
Gli minimi neppur de' nostri guai.
Il più amabile voi tra tanti amanti
Sceglier vi piaccia, e sopra tutto quello
Chi più degli altri ha gioventude e spirito;
Io vi prego d' udirlo un ora al giorno,
Ed un altra la sera, e questa dose
Sia bastante rimedio al vostro male.

THE POLITICIANS.

In ancient days when every brute
To humble privilege had right;
Could reason, wrangle, or dispute,
As well as scratch, and tear, and bite:

When Phœbus shone his brightest ray,
The rip'ning corn his pow'r confess'd;
His cheering beams made Nature gay,
The eagle in his warmth was blest.

But malecontents e'en then arose,
The birds who love the dolesome night;
The darkest grove with care they chose,
And there caball'd against the light.

The screech-owl, with ill-boding cry,
Portends strange things, old women say:
Stops ev'ry fool that passes by,
And frights the schoolboy from his play.

The raven and the double bat,
With families of owls combine;
In close consult they rail and chat,
And curse aloud the glorious shine.

While the great planet, all serene,
Heedless pursues his destin'd way,
He asks not what these murmurs mean.
But runs his course, and gives us day.

BALLAD, ON A LATE OCCURRENCE.

AMONG LADY M. W. MONTAGU'S MSS.

UNGODLY papers ev'ry week
Poor simple souls persuade
That courtiers good for nothing are,
Or but for mischief made.

But I who know their worthy hearts,
Pronounce that we are blind,
Who disappoint their honest schemes,
Who would be just and kind.

For in this vile degen'rate age
'T is dang'rous to do good;
Which will, when I have told my tale,
Be better understood.

A puppy, gamesome, blithe, and young,
Who play'd about the court,
Was destin'd by unlucky boys,
To be their noonday's sport.

With flatt'ring words they him entic'd,
(Words such as much prevail!)
And then with cruel art they ty'd
A bottle to his tail.

Lord Hervey at a window stood,
Detesting of the fact;
And cried aloud with all his might,
"I know the bottle 's crack'd.

"Do not to such a dirty hole
Let them your tail apply;
Alas! you cannot know these things
One half so well as I.

"Harmless and young, you don't suspect
The venom of this deed;
But I see through the whole design,—
It is to make you bleed."

This good advice was cast away;
The puppy saw it shine;
And tamely lick'd their treach'rous hands,
And thought himself grown fine.

But long he had not worn the gem,
  But, as Lord Hervey said,
He ran and bled; the more he ran,
  Alas! the more he bled.

Griev'd to the soul, this gallant Lord
  Tripp'd hastily down stairs;
With courage and compassion fir'd,
  To set him free prepares.

But such was his ingratitude
  To this most noble lord,
He bit his lily hand quite through,
  As he untied the cord.

Next day the maids of Honour came,
  As I heard people tell;
They wash'd the wound with brinish tears,
  —And yet it is not well.

Oh! gen'rous youth, my counsel take,
  And warlike acts forbear;
Put on white gloves, and lead folks out,
  —For that is your affair. (1)

Never attempt to take away
  Bottles from others' tails,
For that is what no soul will bear
  From Italy to Wales.

SONG.

BLAME not that love, too cruel fair,
Which your own charms did first create;
  Blame not my silence and despair,—
Such crimes can ne'er deserve your hate:
  Why should your eyes first stir desire?
  Your matchless wit, why fan the fire?
    Repentance comes too late.

  Vain are the vows that you complain
Are to another fondly made;
  All your advice to me's as vain
You must not—cannot be obey'd;
  My heart can't change, though you command,
  Nor can my heart obey your hand;
    Love's power none can evade!

(1) Hervey was at that time vice-chamberlain.

LINES WRITTEN UNDER THE PICTURE OF COLONEL CHARLES CHURCHILL, (1)

BY LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU.

STILL hovering round the fair at fifty–four
Unfit to love, unable to give o'er;
A flesh-fly that just flutters on the wing,
Awake to buzz, but not alive to sting.
Brisk where he cannot, backward where he can,
The teasing ghost of the departed man.

VERSES, WRITTEN IN A GARDEN.

SEE how that pair of billing doves
With open murmurs own their loves;
And, heedless of censorious eyes,
Pursue their unpolluted joys:
No fears of future want molest
The downy quiet of their nest:
No int'rest join'd the happy pair,
Securely blest in Nature's care,
While her dear dictates they pursue;
For constancy is Nature too.

Can all the doctrine of our schools,
Our maxims, or religious rules,
Can learning to our lives ensure
Virtue so bright, or bliss so pure?
The great Creator's happy ends
Virtue and pleasure ever blends:
In vain the church and court have try'd
Th' united essence to divide;
Alike they find their wild mistake,
The pedant priest, and giddy rake.

SONG.

FOND wishes you pursue in vain,
My heart is vow'd away and gone;
Forbear thy sighs, too, lovely swain,
Those dying airs that you put on!

(1) From a 4to. MS. of Political Songs, etc. collected by Lady Mary Finch, Lord Aylesford's daughter, who married Lord Andover, and was mother of the twelfth Earl of Suffolk. Dated 20th June, 1733, now in the possession of Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, Esq.

Go try on other maids your art,
Ah! leave this lost unworthy heart,
But you must leave it soon.

Such sighs as these you should bestow
One some unpractis'd blooming fair;
Where rosy youth doth warmly glow,
Whose eyes forbid you to despair.
Not all thy wond'rous charms can move
A heart that must refuse your love,
Or not deserve your care.

IMPROMPTU, TO A YOUNG LADY SINGING.

SING, gentle maid—reform my breast,
And soften all my care;
Thus may I be some moments blest,
And easy in despair.
The pow'r of Orpheus lives in you;
You can the passions of my soul subdue,
And tame the lions and the tigers there.

ADVICE.

CEASE, fond shepherd—cease desiring
What you never must enjoy;
She derides your vain aspiring,
She to all your sex is coy.

Cunning Damon once pursu'd her,
Yet she never would incline;
Strephon too as vainly woo'd her,
Though his flocks are more than thine.

At Diana's shrine aloud
By the zone around her waist,
Thrice she bow'd, and thrice she vow'd
Like the Goddess to be chaste.

ANSWER.

THOUGH I never got possession,
'T is a pleasure to adore;
Hope, the wretch's only blessing,
May in time procure me more.

Constant courtship may obtain her,—
Where both wealth and merit fail,
And the lucky minute gain her,—
Fate and fancy must prevail.

At Diana's shrine aloud,
By the bow and by the quiver,
Thrice she bow'd, and thrice she vow'd,
Once to love—and that for ever.

EPISTLE TO LORD HERVEY, ON THE KING'S BIRTH-DAY.

FROM THE COUNTRY,

Where I enjoy in contemplative chamber,
Lutes, laurels, seas of milk, and ships of amber.

THROUGH shining crowds you now make way,
With sideling bow and golden key;
While wrapt in spleen and easy chair,
For all this pomp so small my care,
I scarce remember who are there.
Yet in brocade I can suppose
The potent Knight (1) whose presence goes
At least a yard before his nose:
And majesty with sweeping train,
That does so many yards contain,
Superior to her waiting nymphs,
As lobster to attendant shrimps.
I do not ask one word of news,
Which country damsels much amuse.
If a new batch of lords appears,
After a tour of half six years,
With foreign airs to grace the nation,
The Maids of Honour's admiration;
Whose bright improvements give surprise
To their own lady-mothers' eyes:
Improvements, such as colts might show,
Were mares so mad to let them go;
Their limbs perhaps a little stronger,
Their manes and tails grown somewhat longer.
I would not hear of ball-room scuffles.
Nor what new whims adorn the ruffles.

(1) Sir Robert Walpole.

This meek epistle comes to tell,
On Monday, I in town shall dwell;
Where, if you please to condescend
In Cavendish-square to see your friend,
I shall disclose to you alone
Such thoughts as ne'er were thought upon.

AN ANSWER TO A LADY,

WHO ADVISED LADY M. W. MONTAGU TO RETIRE.

You little know the heart that you advice:
I view this various scene with equal eyes;
In crowded court I find myself alone,
And pay my worship to a nobler throne

Long since the value of this world I knew;
Pity'd the folly, and despised the shew;
Well as I can, my tedious part I bear,
And wait dismissal without pain or fear.

Seldom I mark mankind's detested ways,
Not hearing censure or affecting praise;
And unconcern'd my future fate I trust
To that sole Being, merciful and just!

WRITTEN AT LOUVERE, OCTOBER 1736.

If age and sickness, poverty and pain,
Should each assault me with alternate plagues,
I know mankind is destined to complain,
And I submit to torment and fatigues.

The pious farmer, who ne'er misses pray'rs,
With patience suffers unexpected rain;
He blesses Heav'n for what its bounty spares,
And sees, resign'd, a crop of blighted grain.
But, spite of sermons, farmers would blaspheme,
If a star fell to set their thatch on flame.

CONCLUSION OF A LETTER TO A FRIEND,

SENT FROM ITALY, 1741.

But happy you from the contagion free,
Who, through her veil, can human nature see;

Calm you reflect, amid the frantic scene,
On the low views of those mistaken men,
Who lose the short invaluable hour,
Through dirt-pursuing schemes of distant pow'r:
Whose best enjoyments never pay the chace,
But melt like snow within a warm embrace.
Believe me, friend, for such indeed are you,
Dear to my heart, and to my int'rest true;
Too much already have you thrown away,
Too long sustain'd the labour of the day;
Enjoy the remnant of declining light,
Nor wait for rest till overwhelm'd in night.
By present pleasure balance pain you've past,
Forget all systems, and indulge your taste.

TO THE SAME.

WHEREVER Fortune points my destined way,
If my capricious stars ordain my stay
In gilded palace, or in rural scene,
While breath shall animate this frail machine,
My heart sincere, which never flatt'ry knew,
Shall consecrate its warmest wish to you.
A monarch compass'd by a suppliant crowd,
Prompt to obey, and in his praises loud,
Among those thousands who on smiles depend,
Perhaps has no disinterested friend.

WRITTEN AT LOUVERE, 1755.

WISDOM, slow product of laborious years,
The only fruit that life's cold winter bears;
Thy sacred seeds in vain in youth we lay,
By the fierce storm of passion torn away.
Should some remain in a rich gen'rous soil,
They long lie hid, and must be rais'd with toil;
Faintly they struggle with inclement skies,
No sooner born than the poor planter dies.

LINES WRITTEN IN A BLANK PAGE OF MILTON'S PARADISE LOST.

THIS happy pair a certain bliss might prove,
Confined to constancy and mutual love:

Heaven to one object limited their vows,
The only safety faithless Nature knows.
God saw the wand'ring appetite would range,
And would have kept them from the power to change;
But falsehood, soon as man increased, began;
Down through the race the swift contagion ran,
All ranks are tainted, all deceitful prove,
False in all shapes, but doubly false in love.
This makes the censure of the world more just,
That damns with shame the weakness of a trust!
Ere change began, our sex no scandal knew,
All nymphs were chaste as long as swains were true;
But now, tho' by the subtlest art betray'd,
We 're so by custom and false maxims sway'd
That infamy still brands the injured maid,

APPENDIX.

In the "Letters from Horace Walpole to Sir Horace Mann," lately published, and which were edited by the late Lord Dover, there are two passages relating to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu which require some notice, in order that the real state of the facts to which they refer may be known, as far possible.

The first of these is to be found in Letter 231, dated Mistley, August 31, 1751, and is in these words:—"Pray, tell me if you know anything of Lady Mary Wortley: we have an obscure story here of her being in durance in the Brescian or the Bergamesco; *that a young fellow whom she set out with keeping* has taken it into his head to keep her close prisoner, not permitting her to write or receive any letters but what he sees: he seems determined, if her husband should die, not to lose her as the Count —— lost my Lady O." And in the next letter he again alludes to this report.

Among Lady Mary's papers there is a long paper, written in Italian, not by herself, giving an account of her having been detained for some time against her will, in a country-house belonging to an Italian count, and inhabited by him and his mother. This paper seems to be drawn up either as a case to be submitted to a lawyer for his opinion, or to be produced in a court of law. There is nothing else to be found in Lady Mary's papers referring in the least degree to this circumstance. It would appear, however, that some such forcible detention as is alluded to did take place, probably for some pecuniary or interested object; but, like many of Horace Walpole's stories, he took care not to let this lose anything that might give it zest, and he therefore makes the person by whom Lady Mary was detained "a young fellow whom she set out with keeping." Now, at the time of this transaction taking place, Lady Mary was sixty-one years old. The reader, therefore, may judge for himself, how far such an imputation upon her is likely to be founded in truth, and will bear in mind that there was no indisposition upon the part of Horace Walpole to make insinuations of that sort against Lady Mary.

The other passage is in Letter 232; and after saying that he had lately been at Woburn, where he had had an opportunity of seeing fifty letters of Lady Mary's to her sister Lady

Mar, "whom she treated so hardly while out of her senses," Horace Walpole adds as follows:—"Ten of the letters, indeed, are dismal lamentations and frights on a scene of villany of Lady Mary's, who having persuaded one Ruremonde, a Frenchman, and her lover, to entrust her with a large sum of money to buy stock for him, frightened him out of England by persuading him that Mr. Wortley had discovered the intrigue, and would murder him; and then would have sunk the trust. That not succeeding, and he threatening to print her letters, she endeavoured to make Lord Mar or Lord Stair cut his throat. Pope hints at these anecdotes of her history in that line—

'Who starves a sister or denies a debt.'"

Nothing whatever has been found to throw light upon the ill treatment of Lady Mar by Lady Mary; and that accusation is supposed, by those who would probably have heard of it, if true, to be without foundation. But nine letters to Lady Mar relating to a transaction with a person whom Lady Mary calls "R., a Frenchman," are among the papers which have been communicated to the Editor, which must be the letters alluded to by Horace Walpole, although there appears to be one short of the number mentioned by him, possibly by mistake. In order that the reader may be enabled to see the actual grounds upon which a charge of so scandalous and heinous a character has been made by Mr. Walpole, these letters are now given to the public. They are in *no* degree interesting in any other respect; but inasmuch as the fact of their existence has been asserted in a publication which has been generally read, and that their not being produced might be taken in some degree as an acknowledgment of the charge founded upon them, the Editor has thought it only fair that they should speak for themselves, and that Lady Mary's own account of that transaction should be known.

These letters are without dates by which to fix the precise periods at which they were written; but as the fall of the South-Sea stock began in September 1720, they must have been written in the latter end of that year, or the beginning of 1721.

No. I.

FROM the tranquil and easy situation in which you left me, dear sister, I am reduced to that of the highest degree of vexation, which I need not set out to you better than by the plain matter of fact, which I heartily wish I had told you long since; and nothing hindered me but a certain *mauvaise honte*

which you are reasonable enough to forgive, as very natural, though not very excusable where there is nothing to be ashamed of; since I can only accuse myself of too much good-nature, or at worst of too much credulity, though I believe there never was more pains taken to deceive any body. In short, a person whose name is not necessary, because you know it, took all sorts of methods, during almost a year to persuade me that there never was so extraordinary an attachment (or what you please to call it) as they had for me. This ended in coming over to make me a visit against my will, and as was pretended, very much against their interest. I cannot deny I was very silly in giving the least credit to this stuff. But if people are so silly, you'll own 't is natural for any body that is good-natured to pity and be glad to serve a person they believe unhappy on their account. It came into my head, out of a high point of generosity (for which I wish myself hang'd), to do this creature all the good I possibly could, since 't was impossible to make them happy their own way. I advised him very strenuously to sell out of the subscription, and in compliance to my advice he did so; and in less than two days saw he had done very prudently. After a piece of service of this nature, I thought I could more decently press his departure, which his follies made me think necessary for me. He took leave of me with so many tears and grimaces (which I can't imagine how he could counterfeit) as really moved my compassion; and I had much ado to keep to my first resolution of exacting his absence, which he swore would be his death. I told him that there was no other way in the world I would not be glad to serve him in, but that his extravagancies made it utterly impossible for me to keep him company. He said that he would put into my hands the money I had won for him, and desired me to improve it, saying that if he had enough to buy a small estate, and retire from the world, 't was all the happiness he hoped for in it. I represented to him that if he had so little money as he said, 't was ridiculous to hazard it all. He reply'd that 'twas too little to be of any value, and he would either have it double or quit. After many objections on my side and replies on his, I was so weak as to be overcome by his entreaties, and flattered myself also that I was doing a very heroic action, in trying to make a man's fortune tho' I did not care for his addresses. He left me with these imaginations, and my first care was to employ his money to the best advantage. I laid it all out in stock, the general discourse and private intelligence then scattered about being of a great rise. You may remember it was two or three days before the fourth subscription, and you were with me when I paid away

the money to Mr. Benfield. I thought I had managed prodigious well in selling out the said stock the day after the shutting the books, (for a small profit,) to Cox and Cleave, goldsmiths of a very good reputation. When the opening of the books came, my man went off, leaving the stock upon my hands, which was already sunk from near 900*l*. to 400l. I immediately writ him word of this misfortune, with the sincere sorrow natural to have upon such an occasion, and asked his opinion as to the selling the stock remaining in. He made me no answer to this part of my letter, but a long eloquent oration of miseries of another nature. I attributed this silence to his disinterested neglect of his money; but, however, I resolved to make no more steps in this business without direct orders, after having been so unlucky. This occasioned many letters to no purpose; but the very post after you left London, I received a letter from him, in which he told me that he had discovered all my tricks) that he was convinced I had all his money untouch'd; and he would have it again or he would print all my letters to him; which tho', God knows, very innocent in the main, yet may admit of ill constructions, besides the monstrousness of being exposed in such a manner. I hear from other people that he is liar enough to publish that I have borrowed the money from him; though I have a note under his hand, by which he desires me to employ it in the funds, and acquits me of being answerable for the losses that my happen. At the same time, I have attestations and witnesses of the bargains I made, so that nothing can be clearer than my integrity in this business; but that does not hinder me from being in the utmost terror for the consequences (as you may easily guess) of his villany; the very story of which appears so monstrous to me, that I can hardly believe myself while I write it; tho' I omit (not to tire you) a thousand aggravating circumstances. I cannot forgive myself the folly of ever regarding one word he said; and I see now that his lies have made me wrong several of my acquaintances, and you among the rest, for having said (as he told me) horrid things against me to him. 'T is long since that your behaviour has acquitted you in my opinion; but I thought I ought not to mention, to hurt him with you, what was perhaps more misunderstanding, or a mistake, than a designed lie. But he has very amply explained his character to me. What is very pleasant is, that, but two post before, I received a letter from him full of higher flights than ever. I beg your pardon (dear sister) for this tedious account; but you see how necessary 'tis for me to get my letters from this madman. Perhaps the best way is by fair means; at least, they ought

to be first tried. I would have you, then, (my dear sister,) try to make the wretch sensible of the truth of what I advance, without asking for my letters, which I have already asked for Perhaps you may make him ashamed of his infamous proceedings by talking of me, without taking notice that you know of his threats, only of my dealings. I take this method to be the most likely to work upon him. I beg you would send me a full and true account of this detestable affair (enclosed to Mrs. Murray.) If I had not been the most unlucky creature in the world, his letter would have come while you were here, that I might have showed you both his note and the other people's. I knew he was discontented, but was far from imagining a possibility of this thing. I give you a great deal of trouble, but you see I shall owe you the highest obligation if you can serve me: the very endeavouring of it is a tie upon me to serve you the rest of my life and with eternal gratitude.

No. II.

I CANNOT forbear (dear sister) accusing you of unkindness that you take so little care of a business of the last consequence to me. R——writ to me some time ago, to say if I would immediately send him 2000*l*. sterling, he would send me an acquittance. As this was sending him several hundreds out of my own pocket, I absolutely refused it; and, in return, I have just received a threatening letter, to print I know not what stuff against me. I am too well acquainted with the world, (of which poor Mrs. Murray's affair is a fatal instance,) not to know that the most groundless accusation is always of ill consequence to a woman; besides the cruel misfortunes it may bring upon me in my own family. If you have any compassion either for me or my innocent children, I am sure you will try to prevent it. The thing is too serious to be delayed. I think, (to say nothing of either blood or affection,) that humanity and Christianity are interested in my preservation. I am sure I can answer for my hearty gratitude and everlasting acknowledgment of a service much more important than that of saving my life.

No. III.

I GIVE you many thanks (my dear sister) for the trouble you have given yourself in my affair; but am afraid 'tis not yet effectual. I must beg you to let him know I am now at Twickenham, and that whoever has his procuration may come here on diverse pretences, but must by no means go to my house at London. I wonder you can think Lady Stafford has not writ

to him: she showed me a long plain letter to him several months ago; as a demonstration he received it, I saw his answer. 'T is true she treated him with the contempt he deserved, and told him she would never give herself the trouble of writing again to so despicable a wretch. She is willing to do yet further, and write to the Duke of Villeroi about it, if I think it proper. R—— does nothing but lie, and either does not, or will not, understand what is said to him. You will forgive me troubling you so often with this business; the importance of it is the best excuse; in short

——— 'tis joy or sorrow, peace or strife,
'Tis all the colour of remaining life.

I can foresee nothing else to make me unhappy, and, I believe, shall take care another time not to involve myself in difficulties by an overplus of heroic generosity.

I am, dear sister, ever yours, with the utmost esteem and affection. If I get over this cursed affair, my style may enliven.——

No. IV.

Twicknam, Sept. 6.

I HAVE just received your letter, dear sister; I am extreme sensible of your goodness, which I beg you to continue. I am very glad to hear of the good health of your family; and should be only more so, to be a witness of it, which I am not without some hopes of. My time is melted away here in almost perpetual concerts. I do not presume to judge, but I 'll assure you I am a very hearty as well as humble admirer. I have taken my little thread satin beauty into the house with me; she is allowed by Bononcini to have the finest voice he ever heard in England. He and Mrs. Robinson and Senesino lodge in this village, and sup often with me; and this easy indolent life makes me the happiest thing in the world, if I had not this execrable affair still hanging over my head. I have consulted my lawyer, and he says I cannot, with safety to myself, deposit the money I have received into other hands, without the express order of R.; and he is so unreasonable, that he will neither send a procuration to examine my accounts, or any order for me to transfer his stock to another name. I am heartily weary of the trust, which has given me so much trouble, and can never think myself safe till I am quite got rid of it: rather than be plagued any longer with the odious keeping, I am willing to abandon my letters to his discretion. I desire nothing more of him than an order to place his money in other hands, which methinks should not be so hard to obtain, since he is so dis-

satisfied with my management; but he seems to be bent to torment me, and will not even touch his money, because I beg it of him. I wish you would represent these things to him; for my own part, I live in so much uneasiness about it, I am sometimes weary of life itself.

Mrs. Stoner will be a good person to send things by. I would have no black silk, having bought some.

No. V.

DEAR SISTER,—Having this occasion, I would not omit writing, though I have received no answer to my two last. The bearer is well acquainted with my affair, tho' not from me, till he mentioned it to me first, having heard it from those to whom R. had told it which all the false colours he pleased to lay on. I showed him the formal commission I had to employ the money, and all the broker's testimonies taken before Delpecke, with his certificate. Your remonstrances have hitherto had so little effect, that R. will neither send a letter of attorney to examine my accounts, or let me be in peace. I received a letter from him but two posts since, in which he renews his threats except I send him the whole sum, which is as much in my power as it is to send a million. I can easily comprehend that he may be ashamed to send a procuration, which must convince the world of all the lies which he has told. For my part, I am so willing to be rid of the plague of hearing from him, I desire no better than to restore him with all expedition the money I have in my hands; but I will not do it without a general acquittance in due form, not to have fresh demands every time he wants money. If he thinks he has a larger sum to receive than I offer, why does he not name a procurator to examine me? and if he is content with that sum, I only insist on the acquittance for my own safety. I am ready to send it him, with full licence to tell as many lies as he pleases afterwards. I am weary with troubling you with repetitions which cannot be more disagreeable to you than they are to me. I have had, and still have, so much vexation with this execrable affair, 'tis impossible to describe it. I had rather talk to you of anything else, but it fills my whole head.

I am still at Twicknam, where I pass my time in great indolence and sweetness. Mr. W. is at this time in Yorkshire. My fair companion puts me oft in mind of our Thoresby conversations; we read and walk together, and I am more happy in her than anything else could make me except your conversation.

No. VI.

I HAVE just received your letter of May 30th, and am surprised, since you own the receipt of my letter, that you give me not the least hint concerning the business that I writ so earnestly to you about. Till that is over I am as little capable of repeating news, as I should be if my house was on fire. I am sure, a great deal must be in your power; the hurting me can be no way his interest. I am ready to assign, or deliver the money for 500*l*. stock, to whoever he will name, if he will send my letters into Lady Stafford's hands; which, were he sincere in his offer of burning them, he would readily do. Instead of that, he has writ a letter to Mr. W. to inform him of the whole affair: luckily for me, the person he has sent it to assures me it shall never be delivered; but I am not the less obliged to his good intentions. For God's sake, do something to set my mind at ease from this business, and then I will not fail to write you regular accounts of all your acquaintance. Mr. Strickland has had a prodigy of good fortune befallen him, which, I suppose, you have heard of.

My little commission is hardly worth speaking of; if you have not already laid out that small sum in St. Cloud ware, I had rather have it in plain lutestring of any colour.

Lady Stafford desires you would buy one suit of minunet for head and ruffles at Boileau's.

No. VII.

I CANNOT enough thank you, my dear sister, for the trouble you give yourself in my affairs, tho' I am still so unhappy to find your care very ineffectual. I have actually in my present possession a formal letter directed to Mr. W. to acquaint him with the whole business. You may imagine the inevitable eternal misfortunes it would have thrown me into, had it been delivered by the person to whom it was intrusted. I wish you would make him sensible of the infamy of his proceeding, which can no way in the world turn to his advantage. Did I refuse giving up the strictest account, or had I not the clearest demonstration in my hands of the truth and sincerity with which I acted, there might be some temptation to this business; but all he can expect by informing Mr. W——, is to hear him repeat the same things that I assert; he will not retrieve one farthing, and I am for ever miserable. I beg no more of him than to direct any person, man or woman, either lawyer, broker, or a person of quality, to examine me; and as soon as he has sent a proper authority to discharge me on

enquiry, I am ready to be examined. I think no offer can be fairer from any person whatsoever: his conduct towards me is so infamous, that I am informed I might prosecute him by law if he was here; he demanding the whole sum as a debt from Mr. Wortley, at the same time I have a note under his hand to prove the contrary. I beg with the utmost earnestness that you would make him sensible of his error. Observe 't is very necessary to say something to fright him. I am persuaded if he was talked to in a style of that kind, he would not dare to attempt to ruin me. I have a great inclination to write seriously to your lord about it, since I desire to determine this affair in the fairest and the clearest manner. I am not at all afraid of making any body acquainted with it; and if I did not fear making Mr. Wortley uneasy, (who is the only person from whom I would conceal it,) all the transactions should have been long since enrolled in Chancery. I have already taken care to have the broker's depositions taken, before a lawyer of reputation and merit. I deny giving him no satisfaction; and after that offer, I think there is no man of honour that would refuse signifying to him that as 't is all he can desire, so, if he persists in doing me an injury, he may repent it. You know how far 't is proper to take this method. I say nothing of the uneasiness I am under, 't is far beyond any expression; my obligation would be proportionate to any body that would deliver me from it, and I should not think it paid by all the services of my life.

No. VIII.

I AM now at Twicknam: 't is impossible to tell you, dear sister, what agonies I suffer every post-day; my health really suffers so much from my fears, that I have reason to apprehend the worst consequences. If that monster acted on the least principles of reason, I should have nothing to fear, since 't is certain that after he has exposed me he will get nothing by it. Mr. Wortley can do nothing for his satisfaction I am not willing to do myself. I desire not the least indulgence of any kind. Let him put his affair into the hands of any lawyer whatever. I am willing to submit to any examination; 't is impossible to make a fairer offer than this is: whoever he employs may come to me hither on several pretences. I desire nothing from him, but that he would send no letters or messages to my house at London, where Mr. Wortley now is. I am come hither in hopes of benefit from the air, but I carry my distemper about me in an anguish of mind that visibly decays my body every day. I am too melancholy to talk of any other subject. Let me beg

you (dear sister) to take some care of this affair, and think you have it in your power to do more than save the life of a sister that loves you.

No. IX.

I SEND you, dear sister, by Lady Lansdown this letter, accompanied with the only present that was ever sent me by that monster. I beg you to return it immediately. I am told he is preparing to come to London. Let him know that 't is not at all necessary for receiving his money or examining my accounts; he has nothing to do but to send a letter of attorney to who he pleases (without exception), and I will readily deliver up what I have in my hands, and his presence will not obtain a farthing more: his design then can only be to expose my letters here. I desire you would assure him that my first step will be to acquaint my Lord Stair with all his obligations to him, as soon as I hear he is in London; and if he dares to give me any further trouble, I shall take care to have him rewarded in a stronger manner than he expects; there is nothing more true than this; and I solemnly swear, that if all the credit or money that I have in the world can do it, either for friendship or hire, I shall not fail to have him used as he deserves; and since I know his journey can only be intended to expose me, I shall not value what noise is made. Perhaps you may prevent it; I leave you to judge of the most proper method; 't is certain no time should be lost; fear is his predominant passion, and I believe you may fright him from coming hither, where he will certainly find a reception very disagreeable to him.

Lady Lansdown does not go till Tuesday; I have left the cup with her, and three guineas to be laid out in plain lutestring.

There can be no better specimen of the manner in which a story gains as it passes through the hands of those who delight in gossip, or who are prepared to believe the worst of the person concerned. Horace Walpole refers to these letters as the ground of his story, and so far as they go, they do not support any one of his statements. According to these letters, Lady Mary did not persuade Mons. R. to entrust her with a considerable sum of money to buy stock for him, but she yielded to his earnest solicitations in that respect with considerable difficulty. Neither did Lady Mary "frighten Mons. R. out of England, by persuading him that Mr. Wortley had discovered the intrigue, and would murder him;" but, on the contrary, Mons. R. having returned to France, endeavoured to

frighten Lady Mary into the payment of his losses in his South-Sea speculations, by threatening to print all her letters to him, and to make Mr. Wortley acquainted with everything. Nor would Lady Mary have "sunk the trust," for she repeatedly calls upon him, through Lady Mar, to appoint persons to examine her, before whom she is ready to submit her accounts, and to be questioned. And lastly, Lady Mary never did "endeavour to make Lord Mar or Lord Stair cut Mons. R.'s throat." She certainly threatened him, through Lady Mar, in case of his coming to England; but no one who reads that threat can imagine that it is meant to convey the idea of her intending to have his throat cut by anybody.

Horace Walpole's accusations, therefore, are none of them warranted by these letters; but at the same time, even upon her own showing, Lady Mary cannot be acquitted of allowing her vanity to overcome her judgment, and of placing her character at the mercy of an adventurer. Nor can her gambling in the South Sea funds be defended; the only excuse for which is, the very general prevalence of a spirit of that kind, almost amounting to madness, in all classes of society at that period. To those who know by tradition the severity of Mr. Wortley's principles in regard to everything connected with money—a feeling produced by the recklessness of his father in those matters, against which he had, in the earlier part of his life, constantly to contend—Lady Mary's strong fears of this transaction coming to his knowledge will be readily intelligible. A consciousness of her own imprudence in the whole affair may also be naturally supposed to have added to her fears, without imputing them to a sense of actual criminality. More than once, indeed, in these letters, Lady Mary offers to submit to any examination to which Mons. R. may choose to expose her; and in one of them she even says that if he will only send over a procuration to examine her accounts, she will abandon her letters to his discretion. Such an offer appears to be incompatible with there being anything in her letters which could really affect her character; but it is at least quite clear that Horace Walpole had no right to found upon these letters to Lady Mar so gross and exaggerated an accusation.

Mr. Cole, in his MSS. now in the British Museum, repeats this story; but it is evident that he derives his information from Horace Walpole, his friend and correspondent, as, in the same collection, he states of Lady Mary, that he "heard from Mad. Geoffrin and Mr. Walpole, *who knew her well*, that she was the vilest of womankind, notwithstanding her talents for wit, vivacity, and genius, and elegance of taste, were un-

exceptionable." It may be doubted, however, whether Horace Walpole ever did *know Lady Mary well*. She went abroad in the year 1739, at which time he was only just of age, when he could scarcely *know well* a woman of nearly fifty years old; and she did not return to England till just before her death. In truth, he could have had but a very slight personal acquaintance with her.

Before closing this notice of the attacks made upon Lady Mary, it will be as well to advert to one in which Mr. Wortley has also borne his part. It has been said that both of them behaved with harshness and severity towards their son, who was finally disinherited by his father. Some passages will be found in some of the letters—now for the first time published—that will show the pain which that son inflicted upon his parents by his misconduct; and it was not until a conviction of his being irreclaimable was forced upon Mr. Wortley that he adopted the severe measure of depriving him, by his will, of the succession to the family estate, But even this step was not taken without a sufficient provision being made for him; and in the event of his having an heir legitimately born, the estate was to return to that heir, to the exclusion of his sister Lady Bute's children. This provision in Mr. Wortley's will he endeavoured to take advantage of, in a manner which is highly characteristic. Mr. Edward Wortley, early in life, was married in a way not then uncommon, namely a Fleet marriage. With that wife he did not live long, and he had no issue. After his father's death he lived several years in Egypt, and there is supposed to have professed the religion of Mahomet, and indulged in the plurality of wives permitted by that faith.

In the year 1776, Mr. E. Wortley, then living at Venice, his wife being dead, through the agency (as is supposed) of his friend Romney the painter, caused an advertisement to be inserted in the 'Public Advertiser' of April 16th in that year, in the following words:—

"A gentleman, who has filled two successive seats in parliament, is nearly sixty years of age, lives in great splendour and hospitality, and from whom a considerable estate must pass if he dies without issue, hath no objection to marry a widow or single lady, provided the party be of genteel birth, polite manners, and is five or six months gone in her pregnancy. Letters directed to —— Brecknock, Esq. at Will's Coffee-house, will be honoured with due attention, secrecy, and every mark of respect,"

It has always been believed in the family that this advertisement was successful, and that a woman having the qualifica-

tions required by it was actually sent to Paris to meet Mr. E. Wortley, who got as far as Lyons, on his way thither. There, however, while eating a beccafico for supper, a bone stuck in his throat, and occasioned his death; thus putting an end to this honest scheme.

W.

INDEX.

" A Ballad," ii. 318.
Abbé ——, letters to, i. 232, 262, 267, 299, 302, 322, 328.
Abydos, siege and capture of, by the Turks, i. 302.
" Account of Turkey," by Aaron Hill, i. 294, n.
" A Character," poem, ii. 374.
Achmet Bey, character of, i. 227: his conversation with Lady M. W. Montagu, 234.
——— III. Grand Signior, marriage of his eldest daughter, i. 237: description of his passage to the mosque, 238: personal appearance, ib.
Adam, Mr. Robert, Lady Mary's opinion of, ii. 166: her remarks on his architecture, ib. n.
Addison, Mr. remarks on his being appointed secretary of state, i. 331.
——— Miss, remarks respecting, i. 42.
Adrianople, Lady Mary's journey from Belgrade to, i. 228: climate of, 229: description of Lady Mary's residence there, 230: of the country around, 247: of the Grand Vizier's harem there, 258: of the Kiyaya's, 259: origin of the name of, 262: account of, ib.: description of the exchange at, 263: number of Jews in, ib.: camp of, 264: procession on the Grand Signior's taking the command of the army in person, ib.: mosque of Sultan Selim I. in, 265: other mosques in, 266: seraglio, ib.: letters from, 228, 232, 237, 240, 246, 252, 253, 257, 262.
" Advice," a poem, ii. 330: answer to, ib.
Alcoran, character of, i. 235: remarks respecting, 334.
Alexander Troas, account of, i. 305: inscriptions found at, ib.
" A man in love," a poem, ii. 317.
Amelia, Empress Dowager of Germany, entertainment given by, i. 196.
Amphitrion, comedy of, at Vienna, i. 193.
Andrea Doria, privileges of the family of, in Genoa, i. 312.
" Answer to a lady who advised Lady Mary to retire," a poem, ii. 332.
" Answer to a love letter," a poem, ii. 293.
Antinous, statue of, in Rome, ii. 12: in Florence, 41.
Antiquaries in Turkey, i. 270.
Antiquities of Turkey—Trajan's Gate, i. 236.
Appendix — defence of Lady Mary against the insinuations of Horace Walpole and others, ii. 335.
Aqueduct, remains of one near Tunis, i. 309: ruins of a Roman aqueduct at Lyons, 318.
Arabian poetry, character of, i. 227.
Arcadian column, in Constantinople, destroyed by an earthquake, i. 292. n.
Archer, Mr. account of his accident, ii. 170.
Archipelago, Lady Mary's voyage in, i. 307.
Arcie, Mrs. d', i. 406.
Ardinghi, Signor Aurelio, ii. 32.
——— Signora Diana, ii 80.
Armenians, Lady Mary's account of, i. 298: strictness of their religion, ib.: their marriage ceremony, 299.
Arnaouts, religion of the, i. 235.
Arran, Lord, remarks respecting, ii. 215.
" A Short View of the immorality and profaneness of the English Stage," by Jeremy Collier, i. 193. n.
Assemblies—at Vienna, i. 201: in London, in 1723, 356: in Louvere, ii. 114: Lady Mary's opinion of, 190.
Astell, Mistress Mary, character of, i. 60: her partiality for Lady Mary, 61: her tracts, 51: her remarks to Lady Mary, 62: her Ode to Friendship, ib.
Atlerdan, or place of horses, in Constantinople, description of, i. 291.
Austria, Empress of, Lady Mary's description of, i. 194: her grief for the death of her son, 211.
Authors, remarks on the fate of, ii. 198.
Antin, Duke d', French king's pictures preserved by, i. 321.
Avenant, Mrs. d', i. 311.
Avignon, assemblies in, i. 413: nobi-

lity in, ii. 36: description of the town, ii., 36, 44: refugees in, letters from, i. 413, 414, 416: ii. 30, 33, 34, 35, 37, 43, 44, 45, 205, ib. 206, 207, ib. 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 215, 217.

Bagnio. See *Baths*.
Baillie, Griselda, married to Mr. Murray, i. 343 n.: see *Murray*.
Baily, Mr. dismissed from the Treasury, i. 371.
"Ballad, on a late occurrence," ii. 327.
Balm of Mecca, Lady Mary's opinion of, i. 276.
Baths, description of, in the town of Sophia, i. 229: reception of a Turkish bride in, 295: account of the Grand Vizier's at Calcedonia, 300.
Bathurst, Allen first Earl, allusion to his death, 345 n.: suspicions respecting, 364.
Beaufort, Henry Somerset third Duke of, i. 412: his death, 415.
Bedchamber, see *Schoolmaster*.
Belgrade, town of, Lady Mary's account of, i. 226: inhabitants of, 271: town of, taken by the Imperialists, 330, letters from, 224: 271, 275.
Belloni, Mr. ii. 12.
Bedford, Wriotesley Russel seventh Duke of, i. 360.
Benedict XIV, Pope (Cardinal Lambertini), his death, ii. 176.
Bentinck, Lady Belle, married to the Duke of Kingston, i. 56. See *Kingston, Duchess of*.
——— Lady Elizabeth, married to Thomas Visc. Weymouth, ii. 188.
Bentivoglio, Marchioness Licinia, account of, ii. 153
Bernstoff, Mr. character of, i. 91: dissuades the Countess of Platen, from accompanying George I. to England, 96.
Berkeley, Augustus fourth Earl of, notice of his death, ii. 149 n.
Bill, project of, to have "not" taken out of the Commandments, i. 358.
Blankenburg, letter from, i. 211.
——————— Duchess of, her attention to Lady Mary, i. 212.
Boileau, Monsieur, observation of, i. 250
Bolingbroke, Henry St. John first Viscount, opinion of his writings, ii. 139: Lady Mary's opinion of, 146, 147: her remarks on his character, 148: his partiality for obscurity, 235: epistle to, a poem, ii. 306.
Bolton, Charles Paulet third Duke of, his death, ii. 140.
——— Duchess. See *Fenton*.
Bono, Signor Laura, story of, ii. 65.
Borromean library at Milan, ii. 5.
Bosville, Mrs. her journey to Turin, ii. 34.
Bouthillier, de Rancé, story of, ii 39.
Bowes, Mrs. poem on the death of, ii. 316.
Boyle, Lady Charlotte, married to Lord Hartington, ii. 58 n.
Braithwayte, Mrs., her marriage with Mr. Coleman, ii. 197.
Brand, Thomas, his marriage with Lady Caroline Pierrepoint, ii. 121, n.
Brescia, letters from, ii. 46, 48, 49, 53, 69, 98, 116, 216, 217, 218, 219.
Bridgeman, Mrs. anecdote of, i. 390.
Bristol, Elizabeth Hervey Countess of, letters to, from Lady Mary, i. 183, 209, 237, 288, 293, 313: remarks respecting her, 352: her quarrel with Lady Hervey, 363.
Bromley, Mrs. i. 387.
Brudenel, Lord John, his ill health, ii. 177.
Buda, description of the town of, i. 220.
Buffaloes, description of, i. 254.
Burlington, Lady, her inscription on the portrait of her daughter, ii. 208.
Burnet, Dr. Gilbert, Lord Bishop of Salisbury, assists Lady Mary in her studies, i. 38; her letter to, 115: remarks in his letter to her, 140.
Burning Mountain, account of, ii. 40.
Burying-fields, in Turkey, i. 269.
Bute, John Stuart first Marquis of, MSS. in the possession of, i. 192 n.: notice of his intimacy with Prince Frederick and the Princess of Wales, ii. 123: his influence with Prince George, 155: remarks on his economy, 171: notice of his appointments on George III's accession, 193 n.
—— Countess of, destroys Lady Mary's journal, i. 45: her arguments respecting, ib: her intimacy with Lady Hervey, 70: notice of her birth, 280: of her intimacy with Prince Frederick and the Princess of Wales, ii. 123: with Mrs. Anne Pitt, ib. distinguished by the Princess of Wales, 220: letters to, ii 50, 53, 56, 58, 60, 61, 64, 65, 68, 70, 71, 72, 73, 76, 77, 79, 84, 124, 126, 152, 156, 176, 178, 179, 181, 192.
Butter, introduced in Louvere by Lady Mary, ii 126.
Byng, Lady, inoculates her children, i. 350.
Byron, George Gordon sixth Lord, his lines descriptive of the cruelty of a Corsair, ii. 166. n.

Cabinet of jewels, medals, and antiques in Vienna, remarks respecting, i. 204 n.

Calcedonia, mistakes respecting, i. 300: description of the Grand Vizier's house there, ib.
Calthorp, Hon. Mrs. letter to, i. 349.
Camels, description of, i. 254.
Campbell, Mr. Daniel, his influence with Sir Robert Walpole, i. 87.
——— Lady Betty, notice of her marriage with Mr. James Stuart Mackenzie, ii. 131 n.
Cantillon, Madame, character of, i. 350.
Cape Janizary, the promontory of Sigæum, ancient city of, i. 303; antiquities in, ib.: inhabitants of, 304.
Carleton, Henry Boyle first Lord, his death, i. 367: account of him, ib. n.
Carlisle, Henry Howard seventh Earl, ii. 3; his death, 174.
Carmichael, Lord, i. 344.
Carnival of Venice, i. 397.
Carteret, John first Viscount, afterwards Earl of Granville, ii. 43: his appointments, 45 n.: married to Lady Sophia Fermor, 206.
Carthage, ruins of, i. 309.
Cavendish, Margaret, married to William Duke of Portland, ii. 205.
Cecisbeo, description of, i. 311.
Cenis, mount, ascent of, i. 351.
Chambery, description of the town of, i. 411: inhabitants, ii. 21: letters from, i. 411, 412: ii. 20, 21, ib.
Chesterfield, Philip Dormer Stanhope, fourth Earl, genealogical notice of, ii. 34.
Chevalier ——, visits Lady Mary, i. 314.
Cheyne, Lady Gertrude, notice of her marriage, i. 368 n.
Children, Turkish custom of adoption of, i. 297.
Chiosks, description of the Turkish, i. 257.
Chiswell, Miss, death of, i. 359.
Chloé, Mr., a celebrated cook, i. 383, n.
Circassian slaves, account of, i. 275.
Clare, Thomas Pelham second Marquis of, i. 340, 362.
Clarke, Dr. his intimacy with Queen Caroline and Lady Sundon, i. 397 n.
"Clarissa Harlowe," Lady Mary's opinion of, ii. 95.
Clement XIII. Pope (Cardinal Rezzonico), rejoicings in Padua on his election to the Papal Chair, ii. 176, 230? remarks on his family, 228.
Cleveland, Duchess of, verses respecting, i. 376; her death, 413.
Coke, Edward Lord Viscount, notice of his marriage, ii. 143, n.
—— Lady Mary, remarks respecting, ii. 143; notice of her marriage, ib. n.
Coleman, Mr. his marriage with Mrs. Braithwayte, ii. 197.
Collier, Jeremy, author of "A short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage," i. 193.
Cologne, letter from, i. 182; description of the Jesuit's church in, 183.
Comedies in Vienna, i. 193.
Conclusion of a letter to a friend, ii. 232.
Confinement of Turkish women, erroneous ideas of, i. 227, 242.
Constantinople, size of, i. 269: burying-fields in, ib: antiquaries in, 270: great heat of the climate, 271: fires in, 278: variety of languages spoken in, 288: description of the city of, 289: seraglio, ib: the mosques in, 290: the exchanges, 292: antiquities in, ib.: dervises, 293: reception of a Turkish bride in the baths of, 295: letters from, 267—298.
Convent in Vienna, i. 202. See *St. Lawrence*.
Cook, Mr., his duel with J. Stapleton, i. 364.
Coronation, remarks on George II's, i. 374.
Cornbury, Lord, his death, ii. 122.
Count ——, i. 314, 334.
Countess of ——, letter to, ii. 38.
Court of George I., Lady Mary's account of, i. 90.
Cozelle, Countess of, account of, i. 207.
Craggs, Mr. James, Secretary of state, anecdote of, i. 54: character of, 196: his death, 341 n.
Croix, Monsieur de la, translator of the "Persian Tales, i. 227 n.
Cunningham, Mr. Lady Mary's opinion of, ii. 193
——————— Mrs. Lady Mary's remarks respecting, ii. 193.
Dalkeith, Lady, remarks on her marriage with Charles Townshend, ii. 77.
Dashwood, Sir Francis, i. 405, his marriage, ii. 69.
Davenant, Mrs. her intimacy with Lady Mary, i. 350.
Deloraine, Henry Scot Earl of, married to Miss Howard, i. 347.
Denbigh and Desmond, Countess Dowager of, particulars respecting, i. 36: character of, 365: family, ib. n.: her gaiety, 376.
Dervises in Constantinople, account of, i. 293.
Dijon, number of English families in, ii. 3.
Diversions in Germany, i, 195, 211. of children at Adrianople, 247: in Louvere, ii. 51.
Divorces in Turkey, i. 269.

Doddington, George Bubb, his objections to Mr. Walpole's proposed bill, i. 358.
Dodsley, Mr. Lady Mary's verses published by, ii. 158: errors in the sixth volume of his "Collection of Poems," ib. n
Doge of Genoa, compelled to ask pardon from the King of France, i. 311: attention paid by to Lady Mary, ii. 6.
Dorchester, Lord. See *Kingston*.
Dover, letters from, i. 322, 326.
Drawing-room at Vienna, i. 195.
Dresden, description of the town and inhabitants of, i. 206.
Dresses at Vienna, i. 201: dress of the nuns in a convent there, 202: dress of the ladies at Prague, 205: of the Hungarian females, 221: Turkish dress of Lady Mary, 240: walking dress of the Turkish ladies, 242: description of Fatima's, the Kiyâya's lady, 260: of the Sultana-Hâsiten, 281: dresses in Louvere, ii. 114.
Drew, Sarah, story of, related by Pope, epitaphs to her memory, i. 324, 325, 327.
Drumlanrig, Earl of, his death, ii. n. 141.
Dunch, Mrs. Arabella, her marriage with Edward Thompson, Esq. i. 363 n.: remarks respecting, ii. 145
Duncombe, Col. Anthony, created Lord Feversham, notice of his marriage, ii. 162: of his death ib. n.
Durazzo, Signora Clelia, her intimacy with Lady Mary, i. 411.

Edgcombe, Mr. story respecting, i, 377.
Education, remarks on, ii. 84, 91, 109, 110, 111, 165.
Effendis, explanation of the name, i. 233; account of this class of men, ib.; their religion, 234; their religious opinions, 336.
Egerton, Lady Anne, her dispute with the Duchess of Marlborough, i. 77.
Elizabeth, Queen of England, notice of her Greek translations, ii. 175.
"Elegy on Mrs. Thompson." ii. 316.
"Enchiridion of Epictetus," Lady Mary's translation of, i. 159.
Englefield, Sir Henry, his conversation with Lady Mary, i. 401.
English politics, remarks on, ii. 17.
Epictetus. See *Enchiridion*.
Epilogues—to Mary Queen of Scots, ii. 286, to the tragedy of Cato, 288: to a Friend on his travels, 368.
Epistles — to Lord Hervey on the king's birth-day, ii. 331: from Arthur Grey the footman to Mrs. Mahoney, 310: to the Earl of Burlington, 296: from Pope to Lord Bolingbroke, 306.
Epitaph to the memory of John Hewet and Sarah Drew, i. 324.
Epithalamium, ii. 323.
Essays—a letter from the other world to a Lady, from her former Husband, ii. 253. on a paper called the Nonsense of Common Sense, 254: Carabose à l'Abbé Conti, 258: Maxim of Rochefoucault, 260.
Essek, account of the town of, i. 221.
Eugene, Prince, notice of his victory over the Turks at Carlowitz, i. 225: his liberality to Rousseau, 328: his library, 329.
Euston, George Earl of, his marriage, ii. 208. n.
——— Lady Dorothy, her death, ii. 208 n. inscription to her memory, ib.
Evans, Sir Stephen, notice of his suicide, ii. 197.
Exchanges in Constantinople, description of, i. 292.

Fatima, the Kiyâya's lady, visited by Lady Mary in her harem, i. 259: her beauty, 260: dress, ib.: agreeable manners, 261: conversation with Lady Mary, 285.
Fenton, Lavinia, afterwards Duchess of Bolton, ii 140.
Fermor, Lady Sophia, afterwards Lady Carteret, her beauty, i. 385: remarks respecting her ii. 43: notice of her marriage with John Earl of Granville, ii. 206. n.
Ferrers, Lawrence fourth Earl, notice of his marriage with Mary Meredith, ii. 125. n.
——— Lady Anne, account of, ii. 125. n.
Feversham, Lord, see *Duncombe*.
Fielding, Henry, his attachment to his wife, i. 77: remarks on his second marriage, 78: on his writings, 79: notice of his death, ib.: comparison between him and Sir Richard Steel, 123: Lady Mary's opinion, of, ii. 132.
Fielding, Sally, remarks on her works, ii. 132.
——— Lady Frances, character of, i. 376.
——— Mr. William, assists Lady Mary in her studies, i. 38: death of, 357.
Finch, Lady Belle, Lady Mary's opinion of, ii. 94.
——— Lady Betty, remarks on her marriage with Mr. Murray, i. 383.
Fires, frequency of, in Turkey, 278.
Fitzwilliam, Lord, visits Lady Mary at Venice, ii. 8.
Florence, magnificence of the public

buildings of, ii. 40 : letters from, 11, 38.
Fontainebleau, description of, i. 319.
Fordwich, Lord George Nassau Clavering Cowper, visits Padua, ii. 183.
France, king of, Lady Mary's opinion of, i. 321.
——— remarks respecting the inhabitants of, i. 333.
Francesco Loredano, elected Doge of Venice, ii. 113. n.
Freemasons, society of, at Nismes, entertainment given by, to the Duke of Richelieu, ii. 37.
French ambassadress in Turkey, i. 238,
——— ladies, Lady Mary's opinion of, i. 320.
Furnese, Miss, anecdote of, i. 72 : her marriage, ib. n.

Gage, Lord, i. 352.
——— Lady, account of her separation from her husband, i. 352, 353.
Gainsborough, Lady, account of, i. 367, n.
Galland, Monsieur, translation of the "Arabian Nights," i. 227. n.
Garth, Dr. notice of his foot-match with the Duke of Grafton, ii. 198.
Gay, Mr. verses addressed to, i. 341.
Gemelli, Mr. his mistake respecting Calcedonia, i. 300.
Geneva, inhabitants of, ii. 19 : their simplicity, 20 : letters from, 19, 20.
Genoa, Doge of, see *Doge*.
Genoa, description of, i. 311 : government of, i. 312 : public buildings, ib. inhabitants of, ii. 19 : divorces in, 187 : letters from, i. 310. ii. 17 ib.
George I., King of England, comparisons respecting his court, i. 53 : anecdote of, 55 : Lady Mary's account of the court at his accession, 90 : character of, 92 : his interview with the Countess of Platen, 94 : his resentment to the Prince of Wales, 98 : account of the state of party at his accession, 100 : confirms the jointure of Lord Mar's forfeited estate on Lady Mar, 179. n.
George II. remarks on his coronation, i. 374 : notice of his death, ii. 191.
——— III. purchases Mr. Joseph Smith's collection of paintings and gems, ii. 131.
German courts, remarks on the custom of keeping dwarfs in, i. 215.
Goldsworthy, Mrs. remarks on her conduct, i. 416.
Gotolengo, town of, ii. 59.
Gower, Dowager Lady, death of, i. 355.
——— Lady, death of, i. 372.
——— Hon. Evelyn Leveson, notice of her birth, i. 364 : married to Lord Gowran, ii. 207. n.
Gower Miss Elizabeth, married to John third Earl of Waldegrave, ii. 207. n.
——— Hon. Jane Leveson, notice of her death, i. 356. n.
Grafton, Augustus Henry third Duke of, notice of his marriage with Miss Liddel, ii. n. : 149 foot-match with Dr. Garth, 198.
Graham, General, his illness, ii. 168 : notice of his ill health, 191.
Grand Vizier, description of his house in Calcedonia, i. 300,
Grant, Abbé, character of, ii. 116.
Granville, Earl, see *Carteret*.
Gray, Sir J. his residence in Venice, ii. 167.
Greville, Mr. remarks on his "Maxims and Characters," ii. 138. n.
Guastalla, Duchess, visits Lady Mary, ii. 57.

Hafitén, Sultana, visited by Lady Mary, i. 257 : character of, 258 : account of, 280 : her reception of Lady Mary, 281 : description of her dress, ib. : refutes the story of throwing the handkerchief, 282 : her affection for the deceased Sultan, 283 : number of her slaves, ib.
Hague, letter from, i. 180 : account of, 181.
Halifax, George Montagu fourth Earl of, his death, i. 393.
Hamilton, Miss, married to Earl Brooke, i. 414. n.
Hanmer, Sir T. Lady Mary's remarks respecting, i. 153.
Hanns and monasteries at Constantinople, account of, i. 293.
Hanover, remarks respecting the town of, i. 209 : inhabitants of, 210 : diversions in, 211 : perfection of the orangeries in, 212 : letters from, i. 209, 210.
Harems, description of the Turkish, i. 255 : translation of the word harem, 259 n. : splendour of the harem of the kiyàya, ib. : dances in, 261.
Hartington, Lord, married to Lady Charlotte Boyle, ii. 58 n.
Hay, Mrs. her conduct to Lady Mary, ii. 206.
Heideker, Mr. masquerades instituted by, i. 245.
Henley, Anthony, character of, i. 387 n.
Herbert, Lady Harriet, account of her marriage, i, 389 n.
Herculaneum, discovery of the city of, ii. 13, 15,
Hervey, Lord, his intimacy with Lady Mary, i. 68 : anecdote related of him, 69 : his visits to Lady Mary, 342 : notice of his marriage with Miss Lepell, ib. n.

Hervey George, afterwards fifth Earl of Bristol, returns Lady Mary's correspondence with Lord Hervey to her, i. 69.
——— Lady, character of, i. 70 : her intimacy with Lady Bute, ib. : her praises of Mrs. Murray, 71 : her quarrel with Lady Bristol, 363 : account of her, 367 n. : her intimacy with the Duchess of Manchester, 385.
Hewet, John, story of, related by Pope, i. 324 : epitaph to his memory, 325, 327 : account of, ii. 194 n.
——— Mrs. (afterwards Lady) account of, ii. 194 : letters to, ib.
Hill, Mr. Aaron, author of the "Account of Turkey," and the tragedies of Zara and Merope, i. 294. n.
Hillsborough, Wills Hill first Earl of i. 352 n.
Hinchinbroke, Lady, appointed one of the ladies of the bedchamber to the Princess of Wales, i. 155.
Holderness, Lady, her attachment to Mr. Mildmay, i. 347 : married to him, ib. n. : 349.
Holles, Henrietta Cavendish, see *Oxford*.
Holt, Mr. his marriage with Lady J. Wharton, i. 346.
Homer, many passages in, illustrated by a knowledge of the Turkish customs, i. 248 : correctness of his geography, 305.
Horses, description of Turkish, i. 254.
Houses, description of, in Vienna, i. 187 : in Turkey, 255.
Howard, Miss, married to the Earl of Deloraine, i. 346 n.
Howe, Lady, i. 342. n.
Hungary, inhabitants of, remarks respecting, i. 221, 222.
Hussey, Mr. his marriage with the Duchess of Manchester, ii. 52.

Impromptu to a lady singing, ii. 330.
Ingrafting, see *Inoculation*.
Inoculation, introduced into England by Lady Mary from the Turkish practice of ingrafting, i. 64, 66, 252 : description of, 253.
Inscription — on the obelisk in the Atlerdan, or place of horses at Constantinople, i. 291 : on a stone at the ancient Sigæum, 303 : found at Alexander Troas, 306 : on the tables of brass on the town-house of Lyons, 316.
Ionian antiquities, published by the Dilettanti Society, engraving of marbles in, i. 304 n.
"Irregular Verses to Truth," ii. 268.
Irwin, Lady, remarks respecting, ii. 176.
Italian government, remarks respecting, ii. 186.
——— manners, remarks on, i. 401.
——— vineyards, description of, ii. 120.
Italians, their taste for comedy, ii. 115.

Janisaries, character of, i, 239 : their unlimited power, ib.
Jervas, Charles, a celebrated portrait painter, i. 231.
Jews, privileges and influence of, in Turkey, i. 263.
J——, Dr. Lady Mary's remarks on his death, ii., 236.
Johnson, Dr. passage in his "Life of Pope," i. 67.
Jupiter, collossean statue of, in the gardens of Versailles, i. 334.
"Julia to Ovid," a poem, ii. 267.

Kendal, Duchess of (Mademoiselle de Schulenberg), anecdote of, i. 54 : character of, 93 : her arrival in England, 97.
Kilmansegg, Madame, accompanies George I. to England, i. 93 : character of ib. : her intimacy with Mr. Methuen, 97.
Kingston, Henry Pierrepoint, second Earl of, created Marquis of Dorchester, i. 35.
——— Evelyn fifth Earl of, created Marquis of Dorchester and Duke of Kingston, i. 35 : anecdotes of 36 : refuses his daughter's marriage with Mr. Edward Wortley, 44 : married to Lady Belle Bentinck, 56 : his death, 368.
——— Duchess (Lady Belle Bentinck), her singular conduct on the death of the Duke, i. 368, 369.
——— Lord, son of the Duke of Kingston, his death, i. 48.
——— Lady, wife of the preceding, her attachment to Lord Scarborough, i. 399, n.
Kiskoi, village of, account of, i. 236.
Knatchbull, Sir Wyndman, remarks respecting, ii. 173 : character of, 189.
Kujuk, Checkmedji', or Little Bridge, i. 268.

Ladies—of Vienna, i. 194 : of Saxony, 207 : of Hanover, 210 : of Turkey, 241 : of Paris, 329 : story of a Spanish lady, 296 : of London, ii. 114 : influence of ladies greater in republics than in monarchical countries, 175.
"Lady Hertford to Lord William Hamilton," a poem, ii. 309 : answer to, ib.

Lambertini, Cardinal, see *Benedict* XIV.
Lansdowne, Lady, remarks respecting, i. 343, 345.
Latin inscription, taken by Lady Mary, i. 305.
La Trappe, monastery of, ii. 39.
Law, Mr. respect paid to, by the Parisian nobility, i. 322.
Leeds, Peregrine Osborn second Duke of, remarks respecting, ii. 204.
Leghorn, letter from, ii. 15.
Leicester, Thomas Coke, nineteenth Earl of, his death, ii. 181.
Leigh Miss, story respecting, i. 378.
Leipzig, description of the town of, i., 207; letter from, 206.
Lempster, Lord, visits Lady Mary at Turin, i. 393.
Leopold, Emperor, Lady Mary's remarks, respecting i. 219.
Lepell, Mary, married to Lord Hervey, i. 342. n.
Letchmere, Lady Elizabeth, her extravagance, i. 365 : family of, ib. n.: her death, 381.
Lethuillier, Mrs. comedies given by in Venice, i. 400.
Letters of Lady Mary—before 1717, i. 105: during Mr. Wortley's embassy, 179: 271 : republished from the edition of 1789, 328: to the Countess of Mar at Paris, 340: to Lady Pomfret, 383: to Mr. Wortley, during her second residence abroad, ii. 1, from 1746 to 1756, ii. 43, 84: to Mrs. Hewet, 194: to the Countess of Oxford, 205: to Sir James and Lady Steuart, 263.
Letters—from Mr. Wortley, i. 129: from Mr. Pope, 189, 216, 222, 243, 272, 323 : from the Countess of Pembroke, 338, 339.
Levison, Miss F. married to Lord John Sackville, ii. 206, n.
Liddel, Miss, notice of her marriage with the Duke of Grafton, ii. 149, n.
Lincoln, Henry Fiennes nineteenth Earl of, afterwards Duke of Newcastle, character of, i. 408, ii, 15: allusion to his marriage, 18.
Lines—to a Friend on his Travels, ii. 288: to Mr. ——, 291 : to John Duke of Marlborough, 292: to Mr. Fox, 294 : on seeing a portrait of Sir R. Walpole, 315 : on the death of Mrs. Bowles, 316 : on a man in love, 317: written under the picture of Col. Churchlll, 329 : written at Louvere, in 1736, 332 : in 1755, 333. written in a blank page of Milton's Paradise Lost, ib.
Locke, Mr. his opinion of Dr. Sydenham, ii. 228.
London, gaiety of, i. 345, 359 : remarks respecting, ii. 114.
"Lord Hervey to Mr. Fox," a poem, ii 294.
Lords, House of, singular scene at, i. 391.
Losi, Count Jeronimo, ii. 81 : his marriage, 83.
Lowther, Sir William, his death, ii. 156 : his legacies, ib. n.
——— Mrs. her quarrel with Lady Mary, i. 353 : anecdote of, 354 n.
Louvere, story of an old woman of, ii. 78.
——— description of the town of, ii. 50 : amusements in, 51 : antiquities in, 69 : town of, 90 : assemblies in, 114 : theatrical performances, ib. : butter introduced in, by Lady Mary, 126 : letters from, ii. 50, 51, 54, 60, 64, 65, 68, 70, 73, 78, 79, 84, 96, 100, 105, 109, 110, 113, 114, 115, 118, 121, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 131, 132, 134, 136, 137, 139, 140, 141, 143, 146, 149, 151, 156, 160, 163.
Love-letter, translation of a Turkish, i. 286.
"Lover," the, a ballad, ii. 314.
Lumley, Lady Anne, her projected marriage, i. 381.
Lutherans, follies of the, i. 184.
Lyons, letters from, i. 314, 315 : inscriptions on the town-house of, 316 : public building in, 318.

Mackenzie, James Stuart, his opinion of Lady Sophia Fermor, i. 404 : notice of his letters to Lady Mary, 406 : his marriage with Lady Betty Campbell, ii. 131 n. : appointed ambassador to Turin, 173.
——— Lady Betty, her marriage with James Stuart Mackenzie, ii. 131 n. : remarks respecting her, 176.
Madrid, remarks on the court of i. 328.
Maffei, Marquis, his character, ii. 134 ; his works, 136 n.
Mahometans, remarks on their religion, ii. 102.
Mahometism, numerous sects of, i. 234.
Mahoney, Count, his conversation with Lady Mary, ii. 17.
Maids of Honour at the court of Vienna, account of, i. 195.
Malta, account of, i. 308.
Manchester, William Montague second Duke of, married to Lady Isabella Montagu, i. 355 n.
——— Duchess of, her intimacy with Lady Hervey, i. 385 : anecdote of, 399 n. : married to Mr. Hussey, ii. 51 : lines respecting, 52 n. : notice of her marriage with Mr. Hussey, ii. 214 n.

Mandeville, George, Viscount, attends the balls at Venice, ii. 168.
Manners, Lady B., her proposed marriage with Mr. Monkton, i. 354.
Mantu, Duke of, his palace at Maderna, ii. 63.
Mar, John Erskine Earl of, secretary of state for Scotland, his marriage with Lady Frances Pierrepoint, i. 47 : notice of his death, 179.
——— Countess (Lady Frances Pierrepoint), letters to, from her sister Lady Mary, i. 179, 187, 194, 205, 206, 207, 211, 214, 217, 240, 257, 279, 310 : series of letters to during her residence at Paris, 340.
Marischall, George tenth earl, notice of his death, ii. 230, n.
Marlborough, John first Duke of, reinstated in his generalship, i. 90 : his opinion of Sir Robert Walpole, 92; lines respecting, ii. 292.
——————— Henrietta, Duchess of, concerts given by, i. 345.
——————— Sarah Duchess of, her attachment to Lady Mary and Lady Bute, i. 74 : anecdote of, 75 : her visit to the Princess of Wales, 76 : her family disputes, ib. : her jokes respecting Sir Robert Walpole, 92 : her intimacy with Congreve, i. 357 n. : anecdote of, 399 n.
Marriage, Lady Mary's account of a singular one, ii. 196 : her answers to La Rochefoucault's maxims on the subject of, 260.
"Maxims and Characters," by Mr. Greville, ii. 138.
Meredith, Mary, notice of her marriage with Earl Ferrers, ii. 124 n.
Mildmay, Benjamin, married to Lady Holdernesse, i. 347 n. : 349.
Milsington, Lord, remarks on his marriage with Miss Noel, i. 364.
Mohun, Lady, her marriage, i. 245.
Momus, notice of his project of windows in the breast, i. 189.
Moncenigo, Cavalier Antonio, his generous offer to Lady Mary, ii. 162 : visits her, 164 : his palaces at Venice, ib. : character of, 184.
Montagu, Duchess of, observations respecting, i. 353.
——— Anne Wortley, see *Wortley*.
——— Mr. Edward Wortley, see *Wortley*.
——— Lady Isabella, married to the Duke of Manchester, i. 355 n. : see *Manchester*.
MONTAGU, LADY MARY WORTLEY, error in the "Walpoliana," repecting, i. 34 : parentage of, 35 : remarks respecting her father, 36 : toasted at the Kit-cat club, i. 36 : remarks on her talents, 37 : assisted in her studies by Mr. William Fielding and Bishop Burnet, 38 : anecdote of, 39 : her intimate companions, 40 : introduced to Mr. Edward Wortley, 42 : her correspondence with him, 43 : marriage, 44 : remarks respecting her journal, 45, 46 : her opinion of Wharncliffe Lodge, 47 : grief at the death of her brother, 48 : her facility of writing, ib. : her history of Dolly Walpole, 49 : anecdote of herself in her journal, 54 : refutation of the story respecting her admittance into the Seraglio, 57 : copies into her diary the letters of Pope and Congreve to her during her travels, 59 : her gift to Mr. Sowden, 60 : Mistress Mary Astelle's partiality for, ib., 61 : "Ode to Friendship" addressed to, 62 : remarks on her introduction of inoculation, 63 : on the clamours against it, 64 : on her quarrel with Pope, 66 : passage in the "Life of Pope" respecting, 67 : her attachment to Lady Oxford, 68 : intimacy with Lord Hervey, 69 : her dispute with Lady Hervey and Mrs. Murray, 70 : unjust imputations respecting, 72 : her character, 73 : anecdote of, ib. : her regard for Henry Fielding, 78 : comparison between her and Madame de Sevigné, 79 : her favorite authors, 81 : notice of her son's vicious propensities, ib. : her opinion of Lady Pomfret, 84 : her account of the Court of George I. at his succession, 90 : her letters, previous to the year 1717, 105 : to Mrs. Anne Wortley, ib., 106, 109, 111, 113, 118, 119 : Mrs. Wortley's replies to, 108, 110, 113, 117 : her letter to the Lord Bishop of Salisbury with her translation of Epictetus, 115 : her correspondence with Mr. Edward Wortley Montagu, 119, *et seq* : letters to, from him, 129 : remarks on the Bishop of Salisbury's letter to, 140 : her illness, 143 : her uneasiness respecting her son's indisposition, 145 : her account of George the First's proclamation in York, 148 : her remarks respecting Lord Pelham, 152 : respecting Sir T. Hanmer, 153 : her translation of the Enchiridion of Epictetus, 159, *et seq.* : preface to her letters during Mr. Wortley Montagu's Embassy, 177 : description of the town and inhabitants of Rotterdam, 179 : of the travelling in Holland, 181 : comparison between the towns of Nimeguen and Nottingham, ib. :

arrives at Cologn, i. 182 : description of the Jesuit's church in, 183 : comparison between free towns and those under the government of absolute princes, ib. : remarks on the laws in Nuremburg, 184 : on the follies of the Roman Catholic religion, ib. : on the society in Ratisbon, 185: arrives at Vienna, 187: description of that town, 188 : visits Count Schönbrunn, ib. : letter to, from Pope, 189: description of the opera at Vienna, 192: of a German comedy, 193 : presented at court, 194 : description of the Empress of Austria, 195 : waits on the Empress mother, 196 : remarks on the singular customs in Vienna, 197 : description of the convents in, 202 : of the Imperial cabinet, 204 : remarks on the town of Prague, 205 : description of the town of Dresden, 207 : her account of the Countess of Cozelle, ib ; description of Leipzig, 208 : notice of her conversation with Prince George, (afterwards George II.) 209 : her attachment to the Empress of Austria, 211 : visits the Duchess of Blankenburg, ib. : description of Hanover, 212 : of the climate of Vienna, 213 : takes leave of the Empress of Austria, ib. : her regret on leaving Vienna, 215 : her character of the Prince of Portugal, 216 : letter to, from Pope, ib. : her reply, 217 : arrives at Peterwaradin, 218 : description of the town of Raab, 219 : remarks on the Emperor Leopold, ib. : account of the city of Buda, 220 : of the inhabitants of Hungary, 221 : description of the town of Essek, ib. : remarks on the Hungarian ladies, 222 : letter from Pope to, ib. : her reply, 224 : account of the town of Belgrade, 226 : remarks respecting Achmet Bey, 227 : describes her journey to the Princess of Wales, 228 : account of the oppression of the inhabitants of Servia, ib. : description of the baths in Sophia, 229 : veracity of her statements questioned, 232 : remarks on the extortions in Servia, 233 : on teeth-money, ib. : her conversation with Achmet Bey, 234 : her remarks on religion, 235, 236 : on the government of Turkey, 237 : her opinion of the Grand Signior, 238 : of the French ambassadress, 239 : observations on the Janisaries, ib. : description of her Turkish dress, 240 : her opinion of the beauty of the Turkish ladies, 241 : of their freedom, i. 242 : letter to, from Pope, ib. : her accident, 243 : account of Turkish amusements, 247 : customs, 248 : of the language, ib. : her versification of some Turkish poetry, 249. 250 : remarks on the plague, 252 : her opinion of the practice of ingrafting for the small-pox, 253 : description of the Turkish animals and birds, 254, 255 : of the Turkish houses, ib. : harems, 256 : chiosks, 257 : dines with the Grand-Vizier's lady, ib. : description of her entertainment, 258 : visits the Kiy ya's harem, 259 : account of her reception, ib : her opinion of Turkish music, 261 : account of Adrianople, 262 : of the procession on the Grand Signior's taking the command of the army in person, 264 : of the mosque of Sultan Selim I. 265 : her journey to Constantinople, 267 : of the burying-fields in, 269 ; her collection of Greek medals, 270 : her amusements at Belgrade, 272 : letter to, from Pope, ib. : account of the Greek slaves, 275 : opinion of the Balm of Mecca, 276 ; birth of the Countess of Bute, 280 : visits the Sultana Hafitén, ib. : account of her reception, 281 : entertainment, 282 : visits Fatima, the kiyâya's lady, 284 : her translation of a Turkish love-letter, 286 : different nations among her servants, 288 ; description of Constantinople, 289 : of the seraglio and mosques in, 290 : of the exchanges, 292 : account of the dervises, 293 : of the reception of a Turkish bride in the baths of Constantinople, 295 : of the murder of a Turkish female, 296 : her account of a Spanish lady married to a Turkish husband, 297 : her opinion of adoption, 298 : account of the Armenians, 300 : visits Calcedonia, ib. : describes the Grand Vizier's house, ib. : her journey from Constantinople to Tunis, 302 : description of Tunis, 309 : of the ruins of Carthage, 311 : account of Genoa, ib. : of Cecisbeos, 312 : of the public buildings in Genoa, ib. : description of Turin, 313 : of her journey from thence to Lyons, 315 : her opinion of French statues, 318 : her illness, ib. : description of Paris, 319 : her opinion of the French ladies 320 : of the king, 321 : of Paris, 223 : her dangerous passage to Dover ib. : letter to, from Pope, 323 : her epitaph to the memory of John Hewit and Sarah Drew, 327 :

letters from the edition of her works published in 1789, i. 328: her remarks on the court of Madrid, ib.: her acquaintance with Rousseau, ib.: visits Prince Eugene, 329: account of the Imperialists taking Belgrade, 330: remarks on the Turks, 331: on Mr. Addison being appointed secretary of state, ib.: on the "Iliad," and the "Odyssey," 332: remarks on the French people, 333: on the Turkish religion, 335: conversation with an Effendi, 336: on the intermarriages of different nations, ib.: letters to, from the Countess of Pembroke, 338, 339: letters to the Countess of Mar at Paris, 340: remarks respecting Lord Clare, ib.: respecting the Duke of Wharton, ib.: inoculation, 341: quarrel between her and Mrs. Murray, 343: her observations on Lady Lansdowne, ib.: on her daughter, 344: coolness between her and the Duchess of Marlborough, 345: opinion of Lady J. Wharton's marriage with Mr. Holt, ib.: of the committee of Schemers, 348: of the marriage of Lady Holdernesse with Mr. Mildway, 349: account of the murder of Lord Finch's brother, 351: her esteem for the Duchess of Montagu, 353: remarks respecting Mrs. Louther, ib.: her regret for the death of her uncle William Fielding, 357: her opinion of the letters of Madame de Sevigné, 359: her taste for hunting, 360: acquaintances, 363: her family affairs, 365: remarks on the improvements at Twickenham, 366: on the death of Lord Carleton, 367: on her father's death, 368: quarrel with Mrs. Murray, 369: her opinion of the young Duke of Kingston, 370: remarks on Henry Pelham's marriage, 372: on the coronation of George II. 374: description of Lady Orkney, ib.: her grief for her son's conduct, 380: series of her letters to Lady Pomfret, 382, *et seq.*: remarks on the riots in Wiltshire, 386: her account of Lady Harriet Herbert, 389: of a singular scene at the House of Lords, 391: her projected journey to Italy, 392: arrives at Turin, 393: opinion of Lord Lempster, ib.: of Venice, 394: description of the amusements in, 395: remarks on Lord Scarborough's death, 399: her acquaintance with Miss Skerritt, 400: remarks on the Italian manners, 401: her conversation with Sir Henry Englefield i. 401: remarks on the regatta at Venice, 402: her residence at Rome, 405: remarks on Mr. Mackenzie, 406: arrives at Naples, 407: opinion of the opera in ib.: of the Neapolitans, 408: her residence at Chamberry, 411: her intimacy with the Marquis of Beaufort, 412: her pavilion at Avignon, 415: ii. 35: her letters to Mr. Wortley during her second residence abroad, ii. 1, et seq.: his replies, 2, 3, 22: arrives at Dover, ib.: at Calais, 1, at Dijon, 2: remarks on that town, 3: her interview with Lord Carlisle, ib.: visits the Borromean library at Milan, 4: her acquaintances at Venice, 5: attention paid to, by the inhabitants of, 8: her description of the regatta, 9: her opinion of Florence, 11: arrives at Rome, ib.: at Naples, 12: remark on the Pope, 13: on the discovery of Herculaneum, ib. 14: arrives at Leghorn, 15: remarks on the court of Rome, 16: on English politics, 17: her residence at Genoa, 18: remarks on the inhabitants of, 19: arrives at Geneva, ib.: her opinion of the English ministry, 21: of the town of Chamberry, ib: of Turkish wheat, 22: remarks respecting her son, 26, 27, 28, 29: account of him, 30: conversation with him, 31, 33: inscription for her pavilion at Avignon, 35: account of the nobility at Avignon, 36: remarks on the town, ib.: intercedes with the Duke of Richelieu for the protestants of Nismes, 38: notice of her letter to Sir Robert Walpole, ib.: her account of the monks of La Trappe, 39: of the burning mountain near Fierenzuola, 40: of the statues of Antinous, and the Venus de Medicis, 41: her letters from 1746 to 1756, 43, *et seq.*: her journey to Brescia, 47: her illness, 49: visited by the Duchess of Guastalla, 57: her opinion of the town of Gotolengo, 59: description of her residence at Salo, 61: remarks on the Duke of Mantua's palace at Maderna, 63: account of Signor Laura Bono, 65: her opinion of Lady Oxford, 75, 76: her account of the old woman of Louvere, 78: story related by, 80: her opinion of Lady Vane's "Memoirs," 85: journey to Louvere, 88: description of the town, 90: of her residence there, 91: her opinion of Dean Swift, 92: of Lady Belle Finch, 94: of Clarissa Harlowe, 95: her amusements, 97: quarrel

with Cardinal Querini, ii.98: remarks on her reported publications, 99: her opinion of Richardson, 100: her aversion to controversial disputes, ib: remarks on religion, 101; on Richardson's works, 103, 104: opinion of his projected establishment of an English monastery, 105: observations on education, 109, 111: on the death of the Doge of Venice, 113: on the assemblies in Louvere, 114: theatrical performances at her residence there, 115: observations on the English at Rome, ib.: intimacy with Cardinal Querini, 116: description of her residence, 119: her amusements, 120: remarks on Lady Caroline Pierrepoint's death, 121: on Lord Cornbury's, 122: description of her garden, 123: her ill-health, 124: her letter to Mr. Wortley, 125: remarks on the society in London, 126: her introduction of butter at Louvere, ib.: visits a nunnery, 127: her opinion of Sir James Steuart, 130: of Joseph Smith, consul at Venice, ib.: remarks on Mr. Mackenzie's marriage, 131 n: on the rage for play, 132: her opinion of the Rambler, ib.: of Mr. Fielding, 133: character of the Marquis Maffei, 134: her affection for her grand-children, 137: visited by Lord Roseberry, 138: her opinion of Mr. Pitt, first Earl of Chatham, ib.: her letter to Mr. Wortley, 139: her opinion of Lord Bolingbroke's writings, ib. 146: of Lord Orrery's: 139: of Dr. Tobias Smollett, 140: regrets the death of Cardinal Querini, 142: remarks on Lady Mary Coke, 143: account of an assassination, 145: her opinion of Madame de Sevigné's writings, 146: remarks on Bolingbroke's character, 147: her opinion of the "Essay on Exile," 148: remarks on H. Fielding's death, 149: her opinion of the "Cry," 150: of Richardson, 157: account of the Marchioness Bentivoglio, 153: letter to, from Mr. Wortley, 155: remarks on Sir William Lowther's death, 156: verses written by, published by Dodsley, 158: her vexation, ib.: dialogue between her and Sir William Young in Dodsley's Collection of Poems, ib., n.: her remarks on manufactures at Venice, 159: on the progress of knowledge, 160: on old age, 161: on Lord Feversham's marriage, ib.: on her friend Antonio's generosity, 162: on her amusements, 163: visited by Cavalier Antonio Mocenigo, ii 164: her remarks on Venice, 165: on Mr. Adam, 166: comparison respecting the changes in administration, ib.: her opinion of English ambassadors, 168: of Mr. Oliver, 169: remarks on Mr. Murray, ib.: on Sir Charles Williams, 170: her gratitude to Bishop Burnet, 173: her opinion of Sir Wyndham Knatchbull, ib.: her grief for Lord Carlisle's death, 174: her intimacy with Mr. Walpole, 175: remarks on Lady Betty Mackenzie, ib.: on the death of Pope Benedict XIV., 176: her opinion of Lady Irwin, ib.: her health, ib.: remarks on the amusements in Venice, 177: her attachment to Sir James and Lady Frances Steuart, 178: opinion of Venice, 179: remarks on Lord Leicester's death, 181: on her residence in Venice, 182: her friendship for Signor Antonio Mocenigo, 183: remarks respecting Sir John Rawdon, 184: on the Italian government, 185: on Lady Elizabeth Bentinck's marriage with Viscount Weymouth, 188: her character of Sir Wyndham Knatchbull, 189: her opinion of the use of assemblies, 190: remarks on the death of George II., 191: her opinion of Smollett's and Shebbeare's works, 192: remarks on Mr. Murray's conduct towards her, ib.: on Lord Bute's appointments at the accession of George III., 193: on Mr. Cunningham, 193: her opinion of Madame de Noyer's "Memoirs," 194: her account of a marriage, 196: remarks on authors, 198: on the Duke of Leeds, 204: her partiality for travelling, ib.: opinion of Lord Goring, 205: complaints respecting Mrs. Hay, 206: her remarks on Lady Euston, 208: on the refugees in Avignon, 217: her amusements at Brescia, 219: her opinion of the waters of Louvere, 221: of Lady Pawlet's second marriage, 222: her observations on witchcraft, 225: her dislike of a court life, ib. her rusticity, 227: remarks on hysterics, 228: her opinion of Dr. Sydenham, ib. her intimacy with the family of Pope Clement XIII, ib.: her amusements at Padua, 229: remarks on suicide, 231: on her eyesight, 232: anecdotes related by, 233, ib.: her opinion of the Scottish nation, 235: her remarks on Dr. J——'s death, 236: defence of her conduct against

the insinuations of Horace Walpole, and others, 335.
Montagu, Mr. Sidney Wortley, remarks respecting, i. 40.
Moon, hymn to the, ii. 319.
Morpeth, Lord, remarks respecting, i. 389 n.: ii. 4.
Mosques—description of that built by Selim I. i. 265: of St. Sophia, 290: of Sultan Solyman, ib.: other mosques, 291.
Mountstuart, Lord, afterwards first Marquis of Bute, his illness, ii. 128.
Mummies, curious adventure of one in Turkey, i. 270.
Murray, Mr. afterwards Lord Mansfield, married to Lady Betty Finch, i. 383 n.: notice of his death at Venice, ii. 131 n.
——— Mr. English resident at Vienna, Lady Mary's remarks respecting, ii. 169: remarks on his conduct towards Lady Mary, 192.
——— Mrs. (Griselda Baillie) her dispute with Lady Mary, i. 71, 343, 369.

Naples, opera in, i. 407: mild climate of, ii. 13: letters from, i. 407. ii. 12, 13.
Neapolitans, Lady Mary's opinion of the, i 408.
Nimeguen, comparison between the town of, and Nottingham, i. 181: letters from, ib.
Nismes, Lady Mary's intercession for the Protestants in, ii. 37.
Noel, Biddy, remarks on her marriage with Lord Milsington, i. 364.
Northampton, Charles Compton fourteenth Earl of, character of, ii. 180.
Northumberland, Duchess, her will, i. 387.
Nottingham, comparison between that town and Nimeguen, 1. 181.
Noyer, Madame de, opinions of her "Memoirs," ii. 194, 199.
Nunnery, description of one, in the State of Mantua, ii. 127.
Nuremberg, letter from, i. 183: remarks on the laws in, 184.

Octavia, story of, ii. 80: her marriage, 83.
"Ode to Friendship," by Mistress Mary Astell, i. 62.
Oliver, Mr. Lady Mary's opinion of, ii. 169.
"On seeing a Portrait of Sir Robert Walpole," a poem, ii. 315.
Orford, Robert Walpole second Earl of, his death, ii. 18: his will, ib.
——— Lady, notice of her second marriage, ii. 75, 76,
Orkney, Lady, description of her dress at George II.'s coronation, i. 374: remarks respecting her, ib. n.
Oropesa, Count, i. 328.
Orrery, Lord, character of his works, ii. 91, 92: Lady Mary's opinion of, 139.
Oxford, Edward Harley second Earl of that family, notice of his marriage with Henrietta Cavendish Holles, ii. 205.
——— Henrietta, Countess of, her attachment to Lady Mary, i. 68: observations of, ii. 70: notice of her marriage, 205: letters to, 205 to 258.

Padua, rejoicings in, to celebrate the election of Cardinal Rezzonico to the papal chair, ii. 176: letters from, 159, 161, 164, 169, 170, 172, 175, 182, 183, 192.
Palaces—at Vienna, i. 187: at Hanover, 209: palace of the Grand Vizier at Calcedonia, 300: at Genoa, 312: at Fontainebleau, 319: at Versailles, 321: near Salo, ii. 61: at Maderna, 63.
Palazzo, Countess, her attention to Lady Mary, ii. 49.
Palfi, Count, notice of his retaking the town of Raab. i. 219.
Paris, Lady Mary's opinion of, i. 322 letters from, 319, 320.
Pasha, Ibrahim, verses addressed by, to the Sultan Achmet's eldest daughter, i. 248.
Paulet, Lady N. (Lady Isabella Tufton), notice of her second marriage, ii. 222.
Paulines, religion of the, i. 235.
Pelham, Thomas Lord, (afterwards Duke of Newcastle,) Lady Mary's remarks respecting, i. 152: married to Lady Catherine, daughter of the Duke of Rutland, 372, n.: death of his sons, ii. 6, n.
——— Hon. Margaret, remarks respecting her marriage, i. 356.
Pembroke, Thomas Herbert eighth Earl of that family, anecdote of, i. 338. n.
——— Mary, Countess of, her letters to Lady Mary, i. 338, 339.
Pera of Constantinople, letters from, i. 277. 279.
Peterborough, Charles Mordaunt third Earl of, notice of his marriage and death, i. 348. n.
Peterwaradin, letter from, 218.
Pierrepoint, Lord Gervase, account of, i. 140, n.
——— Lady Carolina, her death, ii. 121: notice of her marriage with Mr. Thomas Brand, ib., n.

Pierrepoint Lady Frances, married to Earl Mar, i. 47. See *Mar, Countess of.*
——— Lady Mary, see *Montagu.*
——— William, remarks on his adherence to the parliament, i. 36.
Pietro Germani, Doge of Venice, his death, ii. 113: his character. ib.
Pinkerton, Mr. error in his "Walpoliana," respecting Lady Mary, i. 34.
Pitt, Mr. first Earl of Chatham, Lady Mary's opinion of, ii. 138.
——Mrs. Anne, appointed to the place of privy purse to the Princess Dowager of Wales, ii. 124. n.
Plague in Turkey, exaggerated stories respecting, i. 252.
Platen, Countess of, account of, i. 94: introduces Mr. Craggs to the elector, 96: created Countess of Darlington, 342, n.
Poems, ii. 267.
Poligamy in Turkey, i. 242.
Pomfret, Lady Henrietta Louisa, series of Lady Mary's letters to, i. 382: account of ii. 5. n.
Pope, Mr. his quarrel with Lady Mary, i. 66: character of his correspondence with her, 67: passage respecting him in Dr. Johnson's "Life of Pope," 70: his epitaph to the memory of John Hewet and Sarah Drew, 324: his house at Twickenham, 341: his love of money, ii. 93: his death, 208: notice of his will, 270: letters to, i. 192, 203, 217, 224, 246, 270: i. 315, 326, 330, 333: his replies, 189, 216, 222, 243, 272, 323.
Portland, William, second Duke of, married to Margaret Cavendish, ii. 205.
——— Lady, anecdote of, i. 374 n.
Portugal, Prince of, Lady Mary's character of, i. 216.
Poultney, Mrs. i. 354.
Prague, letter from, i 205: remarks respecting the town of, ib.
Proby, Mrs. i. 355.
Puebla, General, i. 328.

Queensbury, Duchess of, anecdote of, i. 391: death of her son, ii. 141.
Querini, Cardinal Angelo Maria, character of, ii. 98: works published by, ib. n. 117: his friendship for Lady Mary, ib.: his death, 142: his charitable foundations, ib.: medals and statues to his memory, ib.

Raab, description of the town of, i. 219.
Ramazan or Lent, Turkish manner of keeping, i. 308.
"Rambler," Lady Mary's opinion of, the, ii. 132.
Ratisbon, letter from, i. 185: relics in the churches in, 186.
Rawdon, Sir John, afterwards Earl of Moira, remarks respecting him, ii. 184: created an Irish Peer, ib. n.: anecdote of, 185.
Regatta at Venice, i. 402: description of, ib.
Religion—of the Turks, i. 234: character of the Alcoran, 235: religion of the Paulines, ib.: of the Arnauts, ib.: peculiarities of the Turkish, 269.
Resingade, Mr. his correspondence with Lady Mary, ii. 194.
Rezzonico, Cardinal. See *Clement XIII.*
Rich, Lady, anecdote of, i. 73: account of, 182 *n.*: letters to, ib. 197, 210, 213, 229, 275, 286, 319.
Richardson, Mr. Lady Mary's criticisms upon his novels, ii. 100, 103, 104, 151: his notions of morality, 104: his project of an English monastery, 105.
Richelieu, Duke of, governor of Languedoc, entertainment in honour of, ii. 37: his conversation with Lady Mary, 38.
Riots, in Wiltshire, i. 386. n.
Robinson, Mrs. Anastasia, i. 347: married to Lord Peterborough, 348.
Robotun, Mr. a French refugee, Lord Townshend's reception of, i. 91.
Rodrigue, D. i. 371.
Rome, statue of Antinous in, ii. 12: concourse of English in, 115: letters from, i. 405, 406, 408, ii. 11, 12, 14.
Romney, Lady, i. 344.
Roseberry, James Primrose Earl of, visits Lady Mary at Louvere, ii. 138.
Rotterdam, description of the town and inhabitants of, i. 179: letter from, ib.
Rousseau, his acquaintance with Lady Mary, i. 328.
Roxburgh, Duchess of, the Roxana of Lady Mary's Town Eclogues, i. 344.
"Royal and Noble Authors," by Mr. Horace Walpole, notice of, ii. 174: character of Queen Elizabeth in, 175.
Rudel, Jeffery, story of, i. 273.
Russel, Dr. his doubts respecting the veracity of Lady Mary's statements, i. 232, *n.*
Rutland, Duchess of, married to her attorney, i. 381.

Rycaut, Sir Paul, character of his account of Turkey, i. 234.

"St. James Coffee House," a poem, ii. 272.
St. Lawrence, convent of, in Vienna, miraculous head of our Saviour in, i. 202: dress of the nuns of, ib.: interesting nun in, ib.
———— church of, in Genoa, i. 313.
St. Lawrence, fair of, in Paris, i. 320.
St. Sophia, description of the mosque of, i. 290.
Salisbury, Lord Bishop of, see *Burnet*.
Salo, description of Lady Mary's residence at, ii. 62.
Sandys, Mr. i. 304.
Saxony, Electoral Prince of, visits Venice, i. 396, ii. 6: entertainments in honour of, 7.
S. C. Mrs. letters to, i. 181, 252.
Scamander river, account of, i. 304.
Scarborough, Richard Lumley second Earl of, account of his death, i. 399: Lady Kingston's attachment to, ib. *n*.
Schemers, committee of, Lady Mary's opinion of, i. 348.
Schlick, Count, high chancellor of Bohemia, i. 328.
Schonbrunn, Count, description of his palace, i. 188.
Schoolmaster, curious bedchamber of a Turkish, i. 268.
Schulenberg, Mademoiselle, created Duchess of Kendal, i. 54: see *Kendal, Duchess of*.
Scio, island of, inhabitants of, i. 307.
Selivica, Greek church in, i. 268.
Seraglios, in Constantinople, i. 209.
Servia, inhabitants of, account of the oppression of, i. 228, 233.
Sevigné, Madame de, comparison between and Lady Mary, i. 184: opinion of her writings, ii. 146.
Shebbeare, Mr. remarks on his works, ii. 192.
Shirley, Mr. remarks respecting, ii. 86.
Skerret, Miss, her visit to Lady Mary, i. 362.
———— Mrs. (afterwards wife of Robert Walpole first Earl of Orford,) letter to, from Lady Mary, i. 180.
Slaves, remarks respecting, i. 275, 292.
Small-pox, Turkish practice of ingrafting for the, i. 252. See *Inoculation*.
Smith, Joseph, Esq., English Consul at Venice, his collection of paintings and gems, ii. 131, *n*.
Smollett, Dr. Tobias, account of his works, ii. 140, *n*.: notice of his death, ib.: Lady Mary's opinion of his works, 192.
Sobieski, Princess, her tragical death, ii. 16.
Sommers, John, first Lord, death of, i. 155.
Sophia, Princess, anecdote of, i. 56.
————, St., description of the town of, i. 229: baths in, 230.
Spanish Lady, story of one married to a Turk, i. 296.
Stafford, Lady Claude Charlotte, character of, i. 375: notice of her marriage, ib. n.
Stair, Earl of, his attachment to Lady Walpole i. 359.
Stanton, Mrs., her death, ii. 217.
Stapleton, J. his duel with Mr. Cook, i. 364.
"State of Party at the accession of George I.," Mr. Edward Wortley's account of, i. 100.
Steele, Sir Richard, comparison between him and H. Fielding, ii. 150.
Steuart, Sir James, arrives at Louvere, ii. 130: letters to, 223, 224, 227, 231, 233, 237.
————, Lady Frances, letters to, ii. 223, 226, 229.
Stewart, Hon. George, killed at Ticonderago, ii. 230, n.
Strafford, William Wentworth, fourth Earl of, character of, ii. 15.
Stuart, William, late Primate of Ireland, remarkable passage in the life of, i. 65.
———— Lady Mary, remarks respecting, ii. 73.
Sturgis, Mr., i. 408, 409.
Suicide, observations on, ii:
Sultan Solyman, description of the mosque of, i. 290.
Sundon, Lady, her illness, i. 384: account of her, ib.
Swartzenburg, Count, notice of his retaking the town of Raab, i. 219.
Swift, Dean, ballad in his works, i. 350: his love of flattery, ii. 91, 92.
Sydenham, Dr., remarks respecting him, ii. 228.

Tarrocco, Count, Lady Mary's opinion of, i. 328.
Tchiosléa, seraglio in, i. 267.
Teeth-money, demand of, by the pashas of Turkey from the peasants, i. 234.
Temeswar, Bishop of, his hospitality to Mr. Wortley and Lady Mary, i. 218.
Tenedos, island of, celebrated for its wine, i. 306.
Tendour, description of a Turkish, i. 279.

Teynham, Henry Roper eighth Lord notice of his suicide, i. 349 n.
"The Bassette Table," a poem, ii. 276.
"The Bride in the Country," a poem, ii. 319.
"The Court of Dulness," a poem, ii. 304.
"The Fourth Ode of the First Book of Horace Imitated," ii. 312.
"The Fifth Ode of the First Book of Horace Imitated," ii. 313.
"The Lady's Resolve," ii. 269.
"The Lover, a Ballad," ii. 314.
"The Ninth Ode of the Third Book of Horace Imitated," ii. 324.
"The Politicians," a poem, ii. 326.
"The Small Pox, a poem, ii. 282.
"The Tête-à-Tête," a poem, ii. 274.
"The Toilette," a poem, ii. 280.
"The Cry," Lady Mary's opinion of, ii. 150.
Theseus, temple of, at Athens, destroyed by the Turks, i. 307.
Thistlethwayte, Mrs. Letters to, i. 185. 199, 253, 277, 314.
Thompson, Edward, Esq., married to Mrs. Arabella Dunch, i. 363.
——— Mrs. Elegy on, ii. 316.
Titchborne, Mrs. Betty, story respecting, i. 378.
"Town Eclogues," ii. 269 : notice of C. Jenner's Town Eclogues in Dodsley collection, 270 n.
Townshend, Charles second Viscount, his marriage with Dolly Walpole, i. 51 : sketch of his character, 90 : appointed secretary of state, 91.
——— Charles third Viscount, notice of his marriage, i. 383 n. : remarks respecting him, 388.
——— Lady, account of, i. 384 n. : anecdote of, 388 : appointed one of the ladies of the bedchamber to the Princess of Wales, 155.
Tragedy, French tragedians superior to the English, i. 320.
Travelling—in Holland, i. 181 : down the Danube, from Ratisbon to Vienna, 187 : in Bohemia, 205 : from thence to Saxony, 206 : in Germany, 209 : by land from Vienna to Peterwaradin, 218 : from Belgrade to Adrianople, 228 : across the deserts of Servia, ib., 233 : from Constantinople to Tunis, 302 : from Turin to Lyons, 314.
Travels of Capt. Lemuel Gulliver, remarks respecting i. 373.
Trinity College Cambridge, inscription presented to, by Mr. Edward Wortley, ii. 134 n.
Tripoly, Countess of, story of, i. 273.
Troy, ruins of, i. 304.
Tunis, description of the town of, i. 309 ; tributary to the Grand Signior, ib. ; letters from 302.
Turin, description of the town of, i. 313. letters from, ib. 393. ii 3. 16.
Turkey, ignorance of writers respecting, i. 232, 241, 255, 256, 294 : religion in, 234 : use of wine in, ib. : antiquities, 236 : marriage of the Grand Signior's eldest daughter, 237 : government of, ib. : description of the Sultan of, 238 : character of the Janissaries in, 239 : freedom of the women in, 241 : amusements in, 247 : customs in, 248 : different styles of the Turkish language, ib. : copy of verses addressed to the eldest daughter of the Sultan, 249 : turned into English poetry, 250 : exaggerated ideas of the plague in, 252 : account of the practice of ingrafting for the small-pox in, ib. : description of the various animals of, 254 : birds, ib. : of the houses, 255 : harems, ib. : chiosks, 256 : observations on the Turkish cookery, 258 : description of the harem of the kiyàya, 259 : remarks on the Turkish music, 261 : burying-fields in, 269 : false accounts of, 275 : singular notions in, 278 : frequency of fire in, ib. : climate of, 279 : remarks on the laws, ib. : custom of adopting children in, 297 : amusements of the inhabitants of, 301.
Turkish dress, description of Lady Mary's, i. 240.
——— gardeners, amusements of, i. 247.
——— ladies, their dress, i. 241 : beauty of, ib. : intrigues, 242 : remarks on their freedom, ib. : their pretensions to the knowledge of enchantments, 276 : their singular notions, 278 : erroneous notions of their confinement, 294 : murder of a Turkish female, 296 : doctrine of the Turkish religion respecting, 335.
——— language, different styles of, i. 248 : translation of verses in, 249 : Lady Mary's English versification of, 250.
Turkish love letter, i. 286.
———wheat, Lady Mary's opinion of, ii. 22.
Turks, religion of the, i. 234 : remarks respecting them, 331.
Twickenham, improvements in, i. 366, letters from, 341, 342, 343, 344, 346, 349, ib., 351, 356, ib., 361, 366.

Unfinished sketches of a poem, ii. 302.

Valenti, Cardinal, his attachment to the Duchess of Salviah, ii. 16.

Validé-Sultan, description of the mosque of, i. 291.
Vane, Lady, her acquaintance with Lord Berkeley, i. 390 : remarks respecting her memoirs, ii. 85 : account of her, 284 n.
Vaughan, Lady Anne, her unfortunate marriage, i. 40.
Venice, Doge of, see *Pietro Germani, Francesco Loredano.*
——— comedies and operas in, i. 394, 395 : carnival of, 396 : regatta, 402, ii. 9 : English merchandise in, ii. 159 : carnival of, 165 : amusement in, 177, 180 : senate of, appoints ambassadors to congratulate George III. on his accession, 191 : letters from, i. 394, 396, 401, ii. 4, 5, 6, 7, ib , 8, 9, 57, 152, 157, 165, 167, 168, 177, 179, ib., 181, 187, 191, 192.
Venus de Medicis, statue of, ii. 345.
Versailles, Lady Mary's opinion of, i. 321 : cabinet of antiques in, ib. : collosean statue of Jupiter in the gardens of, 334.
Verses—addressed by Ibrahim Pasha to the eldest daughter of Sultan Achmet III., i. 249 : Lady Mary's English versification of, 350 : addressed to Mr. Gay, 341 : respecting the Duchess of Cleveland, 376 : written in the Chiosk of the British palace at Pera, ii. 384 : addressed to the Imitator of the first Satire of the Second Book of Horace, 298 : written in a garden, 229 : written at Louvere, in 1736, 332 : in 1755, 333.
Vienna, Lady Mary's description of the town of, i. 187 : of the opera of, 192 : fashions in, 194, 201 : singular customs in, 197 : remarkable points of honour in, 200 : account of the convents in, 202 : remarks respecting the imperial cabinet of, 204 n. : balls in, 213 : healthy climate of, ib. : letters from, 187, 192, 194, 197, 199, 201, 203, 213, 214, 217, 328.
Villette, Madame, i. 345.

Wackerbart, Count, ii. 6.
Wales, Prince Frederick of, character of, i. 97 : his dispute with his family, 98.
——— Princess of, (afterwards Queen Caroline, wife of George II.) her influence over the Prince of Wales, i. 98 : letters to, from Lady Mary, 228.
——— Princess Dowager of, her partiality for Lady Bute, iii. 254.
——— George Prince of, (afterwards George III.) remarks respecting him, ii. 155.
Walpole, Sir Robert, lines respecting, i. 54 : his neglect of his son, 52 : motive of his second marriage, ib. : his gratitude to Mr. Campbell, 87 : appointed paymaster, 91 : his influence with Lord Townshend, 92, 100 : his motion respecting the impeachment of the late ministers, 101 : bill proposed by, 358.
Walpole Lady, anecdote of, i. 359 : her attachment to Mr. Sturgis, 407 : lines respecting her, ib. n.
——— Dolly, account of, i. 49 : her marriage with Lord Townshend, 51.
——— Horace, his antipathy to Lady Mary, i. 51 : his generosity of mind, 52 : visits Lady Mary at Genoa, ii. 18 n. : his "Royal and Noble Authors," 174 n. : Lady Mary's opinion of, 175 : account of George II.'s death in his letters to Sir Horace Mann, 193 n. : defence of Lady Mary against his insinuations, 335.
Wastneys, Lady, Lady Mary's letters to Mrs. Hewet bequeathed to, ii. 194 n.
Weymouth, Thomas Thynne third Viscount, afterwards Marquis of Bath, his marriage with Lady Elizabeth Bentinck, ii. 188 n.
Wharton, Philip Duke of, observations on his piety, i. 340.
——— Lady character of, i. 49 : married to Mr. Holt, i, 346.
Williams, Sir Charles Hanbury, his lines respecting the Duchess of Manchester, ii. 51 : Lady Mary's opinion of, 171.
Wiltshire, riots in, i. 386. n.
Wolfe, Gen. killed at the siege of Quebec., ii. 187.
Wortley, Mrs. Anne, her intimacy with Lady Mary Pierrepoint, i. 40 : Lady Mary's letters to, 105, 106 : ib, 109, 111, 113, 118, 119 : her answers, 108, 110, 113, 117.
——— Mr. Edward, character of, i. 41 : his introduction to Lady Mary Pierrepoint, 42 ; his proposals to Lord Dorchester, 43 : firmness of his character, 44 : his marriage ib. : appointed a lord of the treasury, 53 : notice of his embassy to Turkey, 58 : remarks respecting him, 84 : his "Account of the State of Party on the accession of George I," 100 : presents an inscription to Trinity College, Cambridge, ii. 134 : letters to, from Lady Mary i. 119 : during her second residence abroad from 1739 to 1761, ii. 1 : during her last residence abroad, from 1746 to 1756, 43, 51, 54, 56, 57, 59, 75, 78, 125, 139, 177, 179 ; his letters to Lady Mary, i. 129, ii. 2, 3, 22, 155.

Wortley Edward, Jun., letters respecting him, ii. 22, 25, 27: description of him, 30; his interview with Lady Mary, 30, 33.
Wright, Mr. remarks respecting, ii. 178.

York, Archbishop of, assists in the proclamation of George I. at York, i, 148.
Young, Sir William, dialogue between him and Lady Mary, in Dodsley's collections of poems, ii. 158, n.

Zeno, Signor, introduced to Lady Mary, ii. 164.

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